

Beach Party Days: Chapter 11

Summer 1959: June 27, "West Side Story" closed at Winter Garden Theater New York City after 734 performances. July 5, Ben-Gurion's Israeli government resigned. July 17, Tibet abolished serfdom. July 21 the 1st nuclear powered merchant ship, NS Savannah, was christened in Camden, New Jersey. July 24, VP Nixon argued with Khrushchev, known as "Kitchen Debate". July 28, Great-Britain started using postal codes and Hawaii's first U.S. election sent the first Asian-Americans to Congress. August 7, Explorer 6 transmitted first TV photo of Earth from space. August 21, Hawaii became the fiftieth U.S. state. August 31, Los Angeles Dodger's Sandy Koufax broke Dizzy Dean's NL mark of eighteen strikeouts in a game.

Friday evening, June 26, 1959...

*... When you see me in misery
Come on baby, see about me
Now yeah, all right, all right, aw play it, boy
When you see me in misery
Come on baby, see about me
Now yeah, hey hey, all right
See the girl with the red dress on
She can do the Birdland all night long*

*Yeah yeah, what'd I say, all right
Well, tell me what'd I say, yeah...*

Earle had moved to Riverside, Long Island for the summer. Bo, James and Rafe were standing on chairs against the back wall. Nathan Leeson was standing alongside. They all had a half full bottle of Shaeffer beer in one hand and keeping up with the rocking beat by tapping their free hand against the beer bottle. The place was literally rocking as Ray Charles and his band played a song that was just recently recorded on a two-sided 45 record. The song was "What'd I Say".

Bo, James and Rafe were the only white people in the place. It was a black venue named Colonel's Lounge, in Quaytown, several blocks from the high school in the predominantly black neighborhood. Nathan had invited the three of them and arranged for the tickets. Ray Charles had become increasingly popular with white youth since his first big hit on Atlantic Records made the cross-over to the pop charts in 1957. This was to be one of his last performances on what was called in black circles, the Chittlin' Circuit. He was doing this show as a favor for the Colonel, a retired army vet. Ray Charles was beginning to become a recognized performer for all audiences and he was booked to appear in large concert halls all around the country. He already had expanded into the Jazz scene by playing at the Newport Jazz Festival.

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When they had first arrived and made their way to the bar to order drinks, there were quite a few stares and frowns from some of the patrons directed at the white guys. Obviously not many whites frequented Colonel's Lounge, and any new arrivals were treated with reservation and downright suspicion. The stares and the frowns would have made the three of them a lot more uncomfortable had they come in without Nathan as their benefactor. Just about everyone in the place knew Nathan, and once he introduced the three of them, most of the other patrons seemed to accept the white guys as non-threatening. Several of the blacks around the bar area were QHS alumni -- football fans and one-time players -- they recognized Bo and Rafe, by name if not by sight and offered to shake hands. One of the men at the bar made way for them and signaled one of the bartenders to come and serve them. By the time they had their first beers and the show was about to start, they were generally accepted. The three of them had moved to the back wall to get a better view of the show as Ray Charles was escorted onto the stage and seated at the piano. Against the back wall it was also further removed from the heavier smoke that hung over the bar area like a fog that appears on a cool night.

Rafe looked around and watched with fascination at the people dancing on the small dance floor and all around the bar area. The rapid energetic beat of the music was hypnotic and the extremely erotic lyrics with the wordplay between Ray and the three girl backup singers, the Raelets, was captivating. Just looking at the gyrating dancers was like watching a choreographed mating ceremony.

When the show ended, Nathan led the three of them out and a number of the patrons smiled and shook their hands. Several encouraged them to come again. Outside the night air was refreshingly cool and they said goodnight to Nathan. James had driven and they all piled into his car.

“Wow! Wasn't that a helluva show?” Rafe asked enthusiastically.

“God damn right!” replied Bo.

“He sure puts on a great show; great band, and I love the raw sound of the Raelets on several of those songs”, offered James as he drove off. “I wonder what Earle would have thought - being from the South and all. I have to admit I was a little nervous when we first went in. Did you see the look that big black guy gave us when we walked in the door? It was obvious he was the bouncer. I wouldn't want to meet up with *him* in a dark alley.”

“Shit, no! You got that right, Hein!” chipped in Bo. And Rafe and James laughed and offered their agreement.

Then upon reflection Rafe added, “Unlike Burn, I'm not from the South, but growing up in Newark I had experiences where some black kids were intimidating; outright bullies in fact. So, it *was* kind of uncomfortable walking in there being the only white guys, getting those looks as if we didn't belong and were intruders. I suppose that's the way blacks must feel when they walk into an all white bar or restaurant.”

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“Yeah, I guess that’s true, but I never thought about it – I mean with the shoe on the other foot”, responded Bo.

James chipped in, “Okay, I agree it is sometimes true and maybe more in the South than up here in the North, but then what about guys like Nathan? He’s been hanging out with us a lot and everywhere he comes with us, he is accepted and doesn’t get the kind of looks that we got in Colonel’s Lounge tonight.”

Rafe responded, “Hein, you got a point there. But I think part of Nathan’s acceptance in all-white places is that he is with one or more of us, and another part is the way he acts.”

“The way he acts?” asked Bo. “What do you mean?”

“Well, he’s not threatening”, Rafe answered. “He always has a smile and a friendly demeanor and, ah, he’s polite”.

“Yeah, he doesn’t carry a chip on his shoulder or act like he’s angry at every white person as if we are all guilty for the slavery thing”, James offered.

The three of them fell silent for a minute, mulling over the conversation that just ensued. Then James said, “Philosophical discussions always make me thirsty. Who’s up for getting some containers of beer and continuing the conversation? We can park down by the boat launching area at the Quaytown Yacht Club.”

“Great idea, Hein! I’m in”, Bo quickly responded. “Let’s get some containers at the Five Coins bar on First Street.”

“Yep, I’m in. Let’s go!” replied James.

“Me, too, I’m up for it”, Rafe chipped in.

Fifteen minutes later the three of them were sipping draft beer out of quart cardboard containers at the Yacht Club and having a deep conversation about which girl in QHS had the best tits, ass, legs, and lastly prettiest face. But it wasn’t long before the conversation turned to their plans for the rest of the summer and for college in the fall. It was time to get serious and start thinking about the future – a somewhat scary thing because of the uncertainty they all felt about leaving behind the comfortable life they had all known for the past four years.

Friday night, July 3, 1959...

The guys started arriving around 7:30 P.M. and by 8:00 ten of the QHS football players from the class of 1959 were gathered in the garage at Bo’s house, along with Nathan Leeson and James. Bo had invited his teammates, James and Nathan to view films of the QHS football

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games of the past three years. The films were provided by two of the players, whose fathers had volunteered to film the games at the request of Coach Ruffy. Nathan purchased the beer and snacks, but everyone chipped in to reimburse him.

Rafe and Jimmy Barrone arrived in Rafe's mother's '56 Ford; he had picked up Jimmy and they were the last to arrive, so he had to park several houses up the narrow street that dead-ended at Bo's house. As they walked down the street they could hear the voices of the other guys laughing and joking, and as they entered the driveway that was filled with several cars, they were greeted with mock applause.

"About freakin' time you two got here!" yelled Bo, as he threw a bear hug around Rafe and then Jimmy.

"Yeah, where is it written that the co-captain of the team gets to show up late?" Roger Vaccaro joked with a bottle of beer in one hand and a cigarette in the other. "We had to do calisthenics without you."

"Wasn't my fault", responded Jimmy Barrone with a mock look of innocence, "I begged Rafe to drive faster."

A few of the other teammates joined in the good natured ribbing at Rafe's expense. Then all of the teammates welcomed Rafe and Jimmy with smiles, handshakes or slaps on the back. Following the football players, James and Nathan came forward and welcomed the new arrivals. Jimmy moved forward to talk with one of the other fellows.

"So what took you so long, Rafe", asked James with a smile, but a slight bit of concern reflected in his eyes and voice. "Did you have a problem with your mom's car?"

Rafe shrugged and answered, "Ah, no real problem...just that my folks got home late from work and I had to walk up to Tom's bar, where my mom picked up my dad who commutes by train on the Jersey Shore Line between North Kingsboro and Newark. Then I had to drive them home before I could take the car. So, by the time I picked up Jimmy, it was already after 7:30 PM."

Just then Bo walked over and handed Rafe a bottle of Schaefer beer, already opened. "Hey, Rafe, did you see my new car?" Bo asked with all the pride of every teenage boy who ever got the first set of their very own new wheels.

Surprised, Rafe responded, "No way! Where?" Bo turned Rafe around to take another look at the three cars in the driveway, and pointed out a baby blue Triumph TR3 with a white rag top, a British import.

"Hot Damn! That's a sexy looking machine, Bo!" exclaimed Rafe. "Must have cost a bundle; did you save that much money working at the Deli?"

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“I saved enough for about half the cost and my dad added the balance as a graduation gift. Now I have my own set of wheels for commuting to Newark Prep in the Fall and then for College in January,” Bo replied with a huge smile. Rafe had never seen Bo as happy as he appeared at this moment.

“Hey Bo, let’s get the film show going before we all have too many beers to recognize which team was ours!” came a loud announcement from one of the teammates in the garage.

“Come on, Rafe, let’s go get those football films going before these guys get too rowdy and the neighbors call the cops”, Bo laughed. Then Rafe followed Bo into the garage and sat down on one of the folding chairs along with the rest of the group.

For the next two hours, the boys eagerly watched one game film after another. Comments flew through the night air like darts as one or another player recognized himself and remembered a particular play. When the film showed a QHS player making a good run or pass reception on offense or a good tackle or interception on defense, invariably the player involved would stand up and say something like, “Hey, did you see that great play? Let’s rewind the film and show it again”.

Just as invariably one of the other players would counter with a wisecrack like, “Look at that hole I opened; if it wasn’t for me you would have been on your ass before you reached the line”; or, “shit, my grandmother could tackle better than that.”

Laughter rained down in that garage that night as the one-time teammates shared a sort of group communion while re-living their mutual experiences on the football field and reminiscing about their high school experiences. Even James and Nathan thoroughly enjoyed the banter and interjected a few comments that drew laughs.

When the films had all been shown the guys all chipped in to straighten up the garage, fold up the chairs, and stack them up against the walls. Roger Vaccaro picked up an empty cardboard beer case and announced, “Hey, tomorrow is the Fourth of July, Right? So don’t we need to raise the flag up the flag pole? Well, I’ve got a better idea!”

A few minutes later, as each of the guys walked out of Bo’s driveway, they turned to take one last view of the flag pole in the back yard to the right of the garage. Several of the guys saluted toward the flag pole at the top of which was an empty cardboard beer case.

Wednesday afternoon, July 15, 1959...

Bo and Rafe sat expectantly. They had just finished participating with about twenty-five other local ballplayers in a tryout for a professional baseball team. The Phillies were one of eight baseball teams in the National League and they had conducted the tryouts at the Quaytown High School baseball field. Bo and Rafe had been invited to the tryout by a local scout, ArmyTanner,

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who had followed them during their Championship season. Arny was often seen at practices as well as at the QHS games during the baseball season and was a personal friend of Coach Zino.

Bo and Rafe sat on the wooden bleachers listening anxiously to the head scout from the Philadelphia Phillies baseball team. After thanking the young men who attended and offering some platitudes about how pleased he was with the caliber of the ballplayers, he dropped what seemed like a verbal bomb. He told them that despite how talented they all were, what the Phillies organization was primarily looking for was the next great ballplayer with the talent of a Mickey Mantle, or a Willie Mays. The obvious inference was that none of those who had tried out today met that standard. When he saw the look of disappointment on their faces and heard the subdued groans of disillusionment, he attempted to soften the blow by encouraging the young men to continue to work hard on improving their skills and maybe they could get another opportunity to make it in a future tryout with one of the sixteen major league teams.

As the young men vacated the bleachers and started to leave the field, the sports reporter, whose nickname was “Scoop”, and the photographer from the Quaytown Weekly, stepped up to Bo and Rafe and led them up the first baseline along with the two scouts from the Phillies. Following a bit of small talk, Bo and Rafe were posed with the scouts and the next day the photo appeared in the Quaytown Weekly.

Bo and Rafe shook hands with the scouts, “Scoop” and the photographer; then they both walked off the field and out through the gate to where their cars were parked.

“What are you doing tonight, Bo?” asked Rafe as he threw his baseball glove and bat in the open trunk of the ’56 Ford and slammed it shut.

“Got to work down at the Deli for a few hours, then home for dinner, watch a little TV, then try and get a good night’s sleep”, Bo replied matter of factly. “How about you, Rafe?”

Rafe thought for a second, then responded, “It’s too late to go to Cerrito’s pool in Kingsboro, so I’ll just go home and listen to some new 45’s I just bought.”

“What’s happened with that girl from the Bronx you used to date in the summer at the pool? Rose something was her name?” Bo inquired.

“Ah, you mean Rosemarie. I haven’t seen hide nor hair of her or her mother so far this summer. I guess they aren’t going to spend the summer at that bungalow this year. Rosemarie is probably working – that’s what she said she’d do, last year when the summer ended.” Rafe said. “But I’ve got a date this Saturday with the girl I took to the Prom – the girl from Ulster Beach, Jill Brewler.”

“So much for those summer loves, but how’s it going with this Jill? Are you getting any?” Bo inquired with a mischievous smile.

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“Nothing yet but damn near a case of blue balls last Saturday night”, Rafe answered with a laugh. “But this Saturday night might be the magic touch; speaking of magic touch, how about you and ‘Queenie Girl’, Cathy? Any more hand jobs?”

They both laughed at that remark, and then Bo said somewhat more seriously, “We’re double dating again this Saturday with Roger and Gladys. But while she’s been into my pants, I haven’t been able to get into her pants yet.” Once again they both laughed. Then Bo’s countenance became even more serious as he continued, “You know I really like Cathy, but I suspect she is dating someone else besides me. Do you remember that guy who showed up at our baseball practices in the Army uniform – he sat in the bleachers on the first base side where we sat today at the end of the try out? You know the one she introduced us to at one of the sock hops last year – the guy from Ruby Creek Catholic?”

“Oh yeah, I sort of remember; I just didn’t make the connection between him in the uniform and that time at the dance.” Rafe answered. “So what makes you think she’s dating him?”

“Oh, I’m not one hundred percent positive, but at least once she let his name slip while she was talking with Gladys, and then recently she seems to have gotten a bit cooler when we make out.”

Bo thought for a couple of seconds, then responded, “Maybe she feels that since you’re going off to college, you might find another girl at school and she doesn’t want to be left without any other options.”

“Maybe, we’ll see.” Bo said. Then they made tentative plans to get together next week, shook hands, jumped into their cars and drove off -- each of them engrossed in their thoughts.

Saturday evening, July 18, 1959...

*You give me fever, fever in the morning,
fever in the evening,
fever all through the night...*

Rafe had the Philadelphia radio station WADO tuned to the Jocko Henderson show. He was playing Little Willie John’s original version of “Fever”, later covered by Peggy Lee.

“Mmmm. I want you to make love to me”, she whispered in his ear as she kissed him all around the ear, cheek, neck, and lips. She was pushing her pelvis down and rubbing herself slowly against his hardened dick.

Jill was sitting astride Rafe at the center of the front bench seat of the ’56 Ford Fairlane. She was facing him with her legs curled up at the knees on either side of Rafe’s lap. They had

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been making out for over twenty minutes in the driveway outside of Jill's house. Rafe thought to himself, "I may be an inexperienced virgin, but damn if she's not hot to trot. But what should I do? We are in her driveway. What if her father or mother comes out and find us doing it? Shit! Should I or Shouldn't I?"

"Mmmm, oh, this feels so good; make love to me, I want you to", Jill murmured.

Rafe had earlier been rubbing Jill's smallish breasts until the nipples were stiff and for the last couple of minutes he had moved his right hand up under Jill's dress, and had his hand down the back of her panties, caressing her ass. "No girdle or nylons!" he rejoiced silently. He started to maneuver his hand around her hip toward the front and into the cleft between her legs. Jill maneuvered her hand down and started to rub Rafe's swollen dick under his khakis. "This is it. Time to lose your Cherry, Rafe", he thought to himself. "I'm about to get laid for the first time!"

Suddenly the side porch light of the house came on and the side screen door loudly opened and slammed closed. Jill was nearly in a dream-like swoon. Rafe pulled out his hand and had to push Jill away; she withdrew reluctantly. Then In the light from the house Rafe saw something that scared the hell out of him. Jill's father was approaching the car holding a shotgun! "Holy crap! Your father's coming with a gun!" Rafe announced. Jill barely snapped out of her reverie and swung her body around so that she was off of Rafe facing the front windshield.

As Jill's father approached the car, Rafe's heart felt like it would burst out of his chest, the adrenaline coursing through his veins like a raging river. Twenty feet, fifteen feet, ten feet, and then Mr. Brewster suddenly stopped. The shotgun which he had been carrying pointed toward the car, he now lifted up with the barrel pointing skyward. And then Mr. Brewster laughed. He came up to the driver's side of the car, where the window was halfway rolled down and said with a chuckle, "Had ya worried, didn't I? Just joshing ya, son." Then he turned and walked back to the house, went in, closed the door, but left the light on – a signal that it was time to call it a night.

As Rafe drove out of the driveway, Jocko was doing his thing over the radio waves...

*Hello, Daddy-O and Mommy-O,
This is Jocko, your Ace from Outer Space;
Oo-papa-doo, how do you do;*

By the time Rafe got to the highway his heart rate was back to normal. That was the last time Rafe dated Jill.

Saturday afternoon, August 15, 1959...

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The pick up truck turned the corner a little too quickly. Rafe, James, Bo and Earle were in the back and almost lost their balance as Jack Wing made the sharp turn into the parking lot outside the Danish Hop in Sea Bright. What concerned the four guys in the back more than almost getting their asses tossed over the side was the makeshift movie camera they had set up on a tripod. It almost went flying off the side, but Earle reacted quickly and grabbed the tripod.

“Good catch, Burn!” James yelled as he righted himself on the bed of the pickup. “We don’t want to lose our Pussy Catcher. Earle had just recently returned from his summer job in Riverhead, Long Island.

“Shit, Burn, If you had only held on like that to those passes I threw to you during football season”, Bo said jokingly.

“Damn it, Bo, if you had thrown the passes harder, I wouldn’t have had time to get anxious waiting for the damn ball to reach me.” Burn returned the jibe. “But don’t forget I caught that Touchdown pass against Toms River, so kiss my royal Southern butt, Yankee!”

“OK, you two, enough horsing around, let’s concentrate on getting some babes to pose for our ‘movie audition’”, Rafe said with amusement.

A second later Jack pulled the pickup over to a stop in the parking lot. Three girls in bathing suits were walking along toward the beach with beach blankets and beach bags and approaching the truck. The four guys in the bed of the truck were dressed in jeans, sport shirts, loafers on bare feet, and baseball caps.

“Quick, throw the banners over the side!” James ordered.

“Got it, Hein”, Earle said as he and Bo unfurled a banner over each of the sides of the pickup bed.

Curiosity about what these guys were up to got to the three girls and they stopped on Bo’s side of the truck to read the banner. It read “Paramount Studio’s Traveling Auditions - Searching for Future Female Movie Stars! Take our Screen Test Today!”

“This is a joke, isn’t it?” asked one of the girls. “Yeah, must be a joke”, said the second girl. “You guys don’t look like directors”, said the third girl with a laugh of incredulity.

“We’re the advance team”, James said in direct response to the third girl. “The directors send us out to weed out the wheat from the chaff, to coin a phrase from the bible”.

“In other words, we whittle down the list of potentials to a select few girls who have a high probability of making a winning screen test,” Rafe jumped in, intentionally making eye contact with each of the three girls.

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“I can attest to that”, said Jack who had gotten out of the driver’s seat and walked around to the back of the pickup. “I was hired by the studio to drive these four fellows around the shore looking for the next Annette Funicello for an upcoming Beach Party movie”.

“So, are you three up to the challenge? We have the camera right here just waiting to get each of you on film”, Bo said, taking the lead.

By now the three girls had put their beach bags and blankets down, indicating to the guys that they had at least sparked the girls’ interest. The first two girls smiled and appeared to be buying the spiel, but the third girl crossed her arms and had a wary look on her face.

“OK; you!” James said pointing to the first girl. “Come on up here and let’s get you on film! Give her a hand, Jack and Burn”.

Jack lowered the tailgate and grabbed a bench seat off the back of the truck. Earle jumped down and the two of them helped the first girl step up on the bench and then up onto the truck bed. “What do you think guys, should we pose her against the back of the cab?”

Bo and Rafe nodded their heads. Bo answered for the rest of the guys, “Yeah that will do.” And Rafe and Bo guided the girl to the front of the truck bed and turned her around so that her back was leaning against the cab. James took up position behind the tripod and camera, pretending to make an adjustment through the viewer of the Kodak Brownie Starmatic camera. The girl was trying to smile, but it was obvious that she was a bit nervous and beginning to wonder what she was getting into.

Then Rafe said as officiously as he could muster, “But first things first, Hein. We need to get her name, address, and phone number...ah, so the uh, studio can contact her if they think she’s worthy of a screen test.”

“I got it. I’ll get the clipboard and pen out of the cab”, Earle said and he quickly brought them back. Then he looked at the girl and in his thickest southern accent he asked, “OK, sweetheart, give me your name, address, and phone number.”

“M-My name is Sarah Tuttle, and I live at 33 Second Street, in Ruby Creek, and my, my phone number is Redstone 7-6542”, she answered still trying to maintain a smile, but feeling more nervous.

“Thank you”, Earle said, then walking toward the other two girls, “and what is your contact information?”

The second girl, still buying the spiel quickly started to reply, “My name is Joanne Kennedy, and I live at 56 Bay Avenue in Bayshore Highlands. My phone number is Atwater 4-...”.

But before she could finish, the third girl sharply said, “Stop, don’t let these guys bamboozle you. This is all a bunch of hooley, can’t you see that? It’s just a scheme to trick you

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into giving them your phone numbers”. Then to the five guys, “Nice try. I’ve got to hand it to you. This took a lot of imagination. But as for me, I prefer a more honest approach.” And then for the first time she smiled. “Come on girls, let’s get to the beach.”

Earle and Jack helped the first girl down off the truck. As they did, she looked at Earle and said in a low voice, “I won’t mind if you call me sometime.” She smiled at Earle, went to pick up her beach bag and blanket, and joined up with the other girls. The three walked away laughing and one by one looked back at the guys, who were standing there yelling for them to come back and give their names and phone numbers.

As the girls departed toward the beach, the five boys started laughing. “Hot Damn! At least I got a contact and she wants me to call her”, bragged Earle.

Friday evening, August 21, 1959...

*All of my love, all of my kissin'
You don't know what you've been missin'
Oh boy! (Oh boy!)
When you're with me
Oh boy! (Oh boy!)
The world can see that you were meant for me*

*All of my life, I've been waitin'
Tonight there'll be no hesitatin'
Oh boy! (Oh boy!)
When you're with me
Oh boy! (Oh boy!)
The world can see that you were meant for me*

*Stars appear and the shadows are fallin'
You can hear my heart a-callin'
A little bit of lovin' makes everything alright
I'm gonna see my baby tonight...*

The Buddy Holy song, “Oh Boy” was playing on the radio on the Cousin Brucie show from WINS AM in New York. Earle, Bo, Rafe, and James were on the way to the Christmas Tree Inn on Staten Island. As usual, James was driving and would have no more than two drinks, while the other three would likely drink more than their share. Earlier they had gone to the Anvil Inn in Ulster Beach for some of the best pizza around.

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“God that was good pizza tonight!” Bo exclaimed from the back seat next to Earle, as he let out a loud fart. “Here’s a kiss for you, Burn.”

“Damn, Bo, what crawled up your ass and died! Holy crap, open the friggin’ windows all the way!” Earle nearly shouted, even as they were already partly opened to let out the smoke from the cigarettes that James and Bo had earlier smoked.

“Sure glad I’m riding shotgun tonight”, Rafe laughed and turned around to see Bo and Earle doing their usual joking around.

“Best to let all that bad gas out now”, James said over his shoulder, loud enough to be heard over the laughter and ribbing in the back seat. “If we run into some babes at the Christmas Tree Inn, I don’t want you all scaring them off.”

“Good point there, Hein”, and Earle let go with a loud fart “and here’s kiss right back at ya, Bo”.

“Damn it Burn, yours is ten times worse than mine. Hein will need to have the car fumigated - anyone getting in will need a gas mask,” responded Bo.

After the laughter died down, Rafe turned around and asked Earle, “Hey, Burn, what’s with your love life since you got back from Long Island? Are you still seeing that girl you took to the Prom, what was her name, Donna something or other?”

“Donna Conklin; no, I called her right after I got back and she said she is going steady with someone else. I still have her picture from the Prom – pretty girl, but evidently she wants to date someone who is going to be around, while I’m going off to LSC.”

James then jumped in, “Too bad; what about our classmate, Penny Warlock? You and I doubled a couple of times when you dated her.”

“That was over before the Prom. She decided she liked that Freaney guy”, Earle answered. He still had a crush on Penny. “What about you guys? What were y’all up to all summer?”

Rafe, still turned around toward the back seat, was first to respond, “Bo and I went with Nathan Leeson to Joey Pans house. You know Joey, he graduated the year before us. Well, Joey has a collection of Jazz music and we listened to jazz for a couple of hours. I had heard of some of the jazz musicians, but not all. Some were totally new to me – I liked most of it, but not all. He played selections from albums by Stan Kenton, Art Blakey, Dave Brubeck, and a group of scat singers Lambert, Hendricks and Ross. Didn’t you like some of the music, Bo?”

“Yeah, I thought some of the music was cool, but there was some that was just OK”, Bo answered. “Joey is a cool guy. Oh, and while we’re talking about jazz, Rafe and I went with Nathan to Birdland. We saw a guy named Maynard Ferguson, who plays the trumpet and his band and a singer named Gloria Lynn.”

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Then Rafe jumped back in, “Burn and Hein, you should have been there. Birdland is a really cool place. It’s in mid-town Manhattan on Broadway. You enter and go down a stairway to get to the night club. As we started down the stairs we heard Maynard Fergusson playing a number he calls ‘Ole’, a kind of toreador piece like in the bullfights. Well, as we came down the stairs, he hit this really high group of notes with the trumpet – unfreakin’ believable.”

“Oh, shit yeah”, Bo chipped in. “I have never heard a trumpet played that high without any kind of wavering or loss of the notes. And remember I was in the drum and bugle corps in eighth grade. Man, was he wailin’ on the trumpet!”

Rafe continued the thread of conversation, “Then when we got down the stairs, off to the right a couple of steps down, like in a huge sunken living room, are a bunch of tables for people who want dinner and the show. In front of the tables is a good size stage. On the left is a bar, not as big as the bar at the Danish Hop, and just off to the right of the bar area are a bunch of about eight chairs. They call that the Peanut Gallery and that’s where we sat, with the stage only about thirty feet away. You can sit there without ordering food or drinks and listen to Jazz all night. You just pay a ten dollar cover charge. I liked that singer, Gloria Lynne, too, didn’t you, Bo?”

“Oh, yeah, she was good; nice voice”, Bo replied.

“And what about you, Hein, how did your summer go?” Earle asked.

“I had a date the night that they went to Birdland, and beyond that I’ve been pretty much working my ass off, saving money for the Citadel”, James answered as he turned the car onto the access road to the Outerbridge Crossing. Then he continued, “Besides working at the Deli, I took a part time job as a cook at the Howard Johnson restaurant up on the highway. A couple of other guys from QHS are working there, too. Rafe worked there one day and up and quit”, and he laughed.

Rafe felt like he needed to explain the circumstances and responded, “Well, I worked as a busboy, and after eight hours, I was drenched with sweat from the hot kitchen and my ass was dragging, and for what – a share of the waitresses tips? It wasn’t worth it. So I got a two week job at my dad’s company in Newark, taking inventory the last week in July and first week in August.”

Then James asked, “OK, Burn, what about your time out in Long Island? You must have had a few adventures you haven’t told us about yet.”

“Well, there was this one time that I went into a bar and, I don’t remember exactly how it started, but I got into a confrontation with three migrant workers – wetbacks from Mexico, I think”, Earle recalled somewhat hazily.

“So what happened?” James queried, anticipating a story about a barroom brawl.

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Earle rubbed his stubble of beard as he answered, “Well, Hein, my memory is a bit fuzzy. I kinda recall that one of them bumped into me as I was playing pool on one of those junior size bar pool tables and he didn’t have the sense to say he was sorry or apologize. So, I said something like, ‘Hey! What the hell did you do that for?’”

“And then what happened? Did he give you some wise ass comeback?” Bo asked expectantly.

Earle continued, once again rubbing his bearded chin, “Damned right, this wetback made some sort of nasty remark in Spanish that I had no clue as to what he was saying, but I could tell from the sneer on his face that he wasn’t apologizing, nor was he wishing me a good evening. So I turned around with the pool stick in my hand and asked him what the fuck he said to me. Then next thing I know his two buddies who were sitting at the bar came over to back him up. I stood my ground and told him something like he was a rude son-of-a-bitch for bumping into me and not saying he was sorry, but if he and his buddies wanted to tangle with me they could come on and let’s get it on. They stared at me and at the pool cue in my hand and finally put their hands up and said something like ‘No mas’. Then they backed off and left. I was a little suspicious, so I went to the door to make sure they were not waiting for me outside, but they got into their car and drove off.”

“Any other adventures, Burn?” Rafe asked.

Earle thought for a second, smiled and said, “Well, I had this neighbor babe who really turned me on. She was married and about 24 years old. I had a number of wet dreams about her, but nothing ever happened.”

That brought a chuckle and a nod of understanding to the other three guys.

Later that night...

The four guys were headed back from Staten Island, and surprisingly there wasn’t a police checkpoint on the Outerbridge. “It figures there’s no police tonight, since none of us are stoned, only about five or six beers each”, noted Earle.

“I’m still in love with that babe, Jane, I met tonight from Westfield. Man, would I like to get into her pants!” exclaimed Bo.

“Well, she may have been a hot body, but her three girlfriends escaped from the Bronx Zoo!” James retorted. And that brought on laughter from the others.

After a few minutes of silence, Rafe said something that was evidently on the minds of the other guys, as well. “Two more days and I’m off to Milton College for pre-season football

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camp; I'm going to miss you guys and our trips to Staten Island and the other fun we've had these past four years."

That led to a somewhat serious conversation with each of the guys in turn talking about making their preparations for going off to college. "But we're all going to keep in touch, aren't we?" asked Bo, expecting confirmation.

"Yeah, we really should keep in touch", James was the first to respond. "I've never been much for writing, but I will try to write a letter once a month or so."

"Likewise about that letter writing stuff; even though I'm not into that. It was freakin' hard just to write those compositions in English Class – I hated it, but I'll give it a try", said Earle.

Rafe suggested, "Well, since I'll be the first one leaving, I'll send a letter to you three with my college address. It's in the freshman dorm. Then you can write me your addresses with a letter, or even a postcard."

"I'll probably be gone not long after you, Rafe, so I'll send Bo a note when I get settled and he can send you and James my address."

"Good idea, Burn", said James and Rafe and Bo agreed.

"I'm going to try and keep in touch with Jimmy Barrone and Jack Pauley, too. They are both going to Clenboro College.," added Rafe, almost as an afterthought.

"Oh, yeah, that's a good idea. We've really had some good times over at Jimmy's house this summer", Bo said.

"He's got a great looking younger sister, too", Earle added.

"I see you have a one-track mind, Burn!" laughed James. And they all shared in the laugh. It was just the touch to take the edge off their apprehension about leaving for college, and knowing that it was time for them to get serious about the next four years of college studies and much stiffer competition. No longer were they going to be the "kings of the hill", but were about to enter the unknown. It was a sobering thought on this hot August night.

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Events: Fall Semester 1959...

On September 13, Luna 2 launched by U.S.S.R. became the first spacecraft to impact on Moon. On September 15, Soviet Premier Khrushchev arrived in U.S. to begin a thirteen day visit; four days later he was denied access to Disneyland. On September 26, Japan was hit by typhoon Vera; about 5,000 die.

On October 2, Rod Serling's "Twilight Zone" premiered on CBS-TV. On October 8, the Los Angeles Dodgers beat Chicago White Sox, 4 games to 2 in 56th World Series. On October 10, Pan Am began regular flights around World. On October 15, "The Untouchables" premiered on TV.

On November 2, Charles Van Doren confessed that the TV quiz show-"21," was fixed. On November 16, "The Sound of Music" opened at Lunt Fontanne Theater New York City for 1443 performances. On November 19, "Rocky and His Friends" debuted on ABC. On November 20, NY radio station WABC fired Alan Freed over the payola scandal. On November 21, Jack Benny (violin) and Richard Nixon (piano) played their famed duet at the White House.

On December 1, the first color photograph of Earth from outer space was sent back. On December 21, Citizens of Deerfield, Illinois blocked building of interracial housing, and on December 25, Sony brought transistor TV 8-301 to the market.

Saturday evening, September 12, 1959...

Rafe was seated at his desk in the freshman dorm on the campus of Milton College. He was just about to finish writing a letter to Bo and James. His roommate's radio was tuned to WJW-AM (850), the Cleveland Rock and Roll station where Alan Freed first became a nationally famous disk jockey. Eddie Cochran's "Summertime Blues" was playing, introduced by a local DJ who was not on a par with Freed.

*Well, I'm a-gonna raise a fuss,
I'm a-gonna raise a holler
About a-workin' all summer
Just to try to earn a dollar
But every time I call my baby
Try'na get a date
My boss says, "No dice, son,
You gotta work a-late."
Sometimes I wonder what I'm a-gonna do
There ain't no cure for this summertime blues...*

Rafe read over the letter to check for mistakes...

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... We had two weeks of twice a day practice on the practice football field. God, was my ass dragging! I would have lost weight if it hadn't of been for the meals we were fed at the Student Center dining room – lots of meat, potatoes and gravy, and seconds and thirds, if we wanted.

The worst part of the practices was the blocking drills, where two blockers faced each other straddled over a two by ten wooden plank – whenever I started to block the other guy and I stepped on the board with my cleats, my leg would go flying out and my knee would come down hard on the board. After two weeks of that shit, my knees were sore as hell. The idea is to train yourself to keep your legs separated and your feet under you to maintain your balance, but with that damn plank between your legs one push left or right from contact with the other guy and one or both of you wind up with a leg flying out, your balance destroyed and a knee crashing down on the plank.

This week was the start of classes and like the rest of the Freshmen that arrived on campus this week, I had to wear that stupid beanie. Fortunately being on the football team I didn't have to endure as much hazing as the new arrivals. During football camp we all hung out at the Delta Kappa Delta fraternity house. Ricky Briggs is a member of this Frat – you remember Ricky, he graduated the year before us and played center on the QHS team. He's playing offensive guard here at Milton.

The upper-class football players tell me that the best looking chicks are in the Chi Zeta sorority – lots of blondes, many from Connecticut and the New England states, as well as from Ohio. From what I've seen the first week, a lot of the sorority girls appear to come from upper middleclass or wealthy families, higher socio-economic class than all of our families and the students at QHS. But I would stack Cathy Woods, Dana Sloane and Martha Luchese up against them.

Oh, have you seen in the news that the Soviets launched a spacecraft that is due to hit the moon tomorrow? The U.S.A. is running way behind in this technology – the Ruskies are beating our butts in space exploration. I read an article in Popular Mechanics that predicts that someday in the near future it will be possible to establish a platform in Space from which rockets can be launched at any target on Earth. If the Soviets get there first, we will be in deep shit.

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Well, guys, I got to sign off now, Time to go down to the local pub, Porky's, for a couple of 3.2 beers (at 18 in Ohio you can drink "low" beer, alcohol under 3.2%). Downstairs at the pub is a rathskeller. We just have to be careful not to have one of the football coaches see us.

So long and write back – let me know what you two are up to. Oh, and Bo or Hein, if you get a letter from Burn, send me his address.

*Your Pal,
Rafe*

That same evening...

Earle was sitting in a booth at the Tiger Inn in Baton Rouge with a couple of other LSC freshmen from the same dorm, one of whom was like Earle a "walk-on" trying out for the LSC football team. The three of them had already downed several twenty-five cent beers to wash down the orders of six for a dollar hotdogs they shared. Earle looked at the other two guys and laughingly said, "We must look like damned fool assholes with our heads shaved and these dumb ass beanie caps."

Billy Joe Harkin, the other football hopeful, had been drinking from his beer glass and almost gagged as he started to laugh at Earle's comment while still swallowing the beer. When he recovered, he blurted out "God damn it, Burnell, I darn near choked to death!"

Jim the other classmate, also laughing, said "Well that may be true for y'all, but I think the freshmen ladies like the bald head on my shoulders; it kind of reminds them of my other bald head." Earle and Billy Joe looked quizzically at Jim and after a short pause he continued, "The one between my legs".

With that the three of them burst out laughing so hard that tears were forming in their eyes. About a minute later the three of them were able to get the hilarity under control and Earle said with as much seriousness as he could muster, "Well, after the first home game, it will be all she wrote; we can toss these beanies and let our hair grow back. But I'm not exactly thrilled that we're also supposed to wear our pajamas to that game."

"Y'all can wear your PJ's, but this ole' Rebel ain't going to. I'm pretty sure I'm going to get picked to suit up as one of the freshman players who will sit on the bench for the game", added Billy Joe.

"Ya think so?" queried Earle.

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“One of the coaches told me he was going to recommend me to varsity backfield coach Lance”, replied Billy Joe.

“Well, good for you”, Earle said. He was both happy for Billy Joe and a little bit envious.

Jim nodded his agreement as he slid out of the booth. “Sorry guys --time for me to go; got a hot date with that cute freshman girl, Maggie Hornung; see y’all tomorrow”. And Jim left.

“Well, how about another round, Burnell?” asked Billy Joe.

“OK, my turn to buy”, responded Earle, and he slid out of the booth, went over to the bar, ordered two drafts of Budweiser, and a few minutes later came back to the booth with full glasses.

“I’m amazed, Burnell”, Billy Joe said quietly as Earle sat down and pushed one glass toward him. “You sure as shootin’ don’t look like your only sixteen, but you never get asked to show proof that you’re eighteen.”

“Only one time was I asked in a package store, but I had a phony ID and the guy hardly looked at it; and that was in New Jersey where the drinking age is twenty-one”, Earle said with a smile.

An hour later, Billy Joe and Earle walked back to the dorm. They were not drunk, but certainly feeling no pain and they were singing the LSC fight song, exceedingly off key. After saying goodnight, Earle took the stairs up to the second floor and entered his room.

His roommate, José, from South America, was sitting at his desk studying. “Damn, I got nothing in common with this rich bastard”, Earle thought to himself as he grabbed his PJs, robe, toothbrush and toothpaste and headed to the common bathroom down the hall. Earle was not into studying, as this was his first time away from home and no one around to watch over him. He had always managed to do OK without much studying all through high school. As an only child, he had no older siblings to look up to and mentor him. But he was used to adapting to new locations and people, having moved with his parents so many times to so many places.

After changing in the bathroom, he began to brush his teeth. In his mind he recalled the plane flight to Baton Rouge in August after saying farewell to Bo, Rafe, and Hein, and he wondered how they were doing. “Well, tomorrow is Sunday and the rates will be lower, so maybe I’ll try calling Bo’s house and talk to him if he’s there, or at least leave my address and the dorm phone with his family if he’s not there,” he mused as he examined his face for zits in the mirror. “Good! No zits; wouldn’t want to detract from this handsome face, even with this bald head”, he half-jokingly said to himself.

Then as he left the bathroom and headed back to his room he thought to himself, “I’m not one for writing letters, but maybe I should give it a try; I have the addresses of Bo, Hein and Rafe written down on a piece of paper somewhere...probably in the suitcase. Eh, it’s easier to

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make a phone call...won't have to drop too many coins in the dorm phone on Sunday, when the rates are lower".

Wednesday Afternoon, September 23, 1959...

The blue TR3 was humming along heading south on the Garden State Parkway. Bo was trying to relax after several hours of classes at Newark Prep. He was a little annoyed with himself for not applying himself more during high school and not taking more College Prep classes, but he knew that if he wanted to get into college, he had to get good grades on the three additional courses he was now taking to give himself the best chance of being accepted. "I'm going to do this!" he promised himself, gripping the steering wheel in a stranglehold to emphasize it.

Now that he had made that commitment, he relaxed and drove on. He had to get to work at the Deli, where he still worked several evenings and occasional Sundays. The job paid for gas for the TR3, cigarettes, and school. With his internal radar now calmly set on navigating to the Deli, Bo's mind recalled the phone call from Burn week before last. "It was good to hear from Burn", he thought to himself, "sounds like he's having a ball in college; God damn Rebel is back with all those other Rebels." And he laughed aloud at his private rib.

As the TR3 exited off the Parkway, Bo slowed to pay the toll and then went on toward downtown Quaytown. On his way down Ridge Street, his thoughts turned to the letter he had received from Rafe last week and the letter he had written back to Rafe. "Never thought I'd be writing letters, but it wasn't that big of a deal. Rafe's letter was over ten pages, so he must like to write. But it's good that we can all keep in touch one way or another, and if it means writing an occasional letter then what the Hell...I'm OK with that. I hope Rafe and Hein can get home for Thanksgiving and we can go to the Turkey Day game at QHS – maybe this year they will beat Mason".

Bo turned the TR3 off Ridge onto Front Street and was immediately shocked to see a police car and an ambulance outside the Deli. He quickly pulled the car over into a parking spot, got out and quickly stepped up the sidewalk to the Deli. "What's going on?" He asked Patrolman Brody, who he knew.

"I can't let you in the store, Bo", the patrolman said officially. "There's been a shooting".

"A Shooting? What happened, was it a robbery? Is Joe alright?" Bo asked with great trepidation.

"Well, since I know you, Bo, and you have worked for Joe for a long time, I suppose I can tell you", responded Brody.

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Now quite fearful, Bo pleadingly asked, “What, What’s happened?” A crowd had already gathered along the sidewalks on both sides of Front Street.

With a look of concern, Brody put his hand on Bo’s shoulder, pulled him aside and said in a quiet voice so that none of the other bystanders who had gathered would hear, “I’m afraid it appears to be a suicide; looks like Joe shot himself in the head. So that’s why I can’t allow you, or anyone, into the store. The coroner and the emergency squad is in their now, taking care of things”.

Bo was absolutely stunned! His mind could not seem to take this in. How could something like this happen? He had seen no evidence that Joe was depressed or seemed worried about anything?

Brody saw the look on Bo’s face and said sympathetically, “Nothing you can do here now; go home Bo; go home”.

Bo felt like he was in a stupor. He turned like a robot and walked back to his car. He didn’t remember driving home, and when he arrived, he was still in disbelief. He told his parents, ignored his mom’s offer of dinner, went to his bedroom, fought away the tears and wrestled with his thoughts until he fell asleep. But just before he fell asleep it occurred to him that he would have to write to Hein to let him know about Joe.

Friday morning, October 9, 1959...

“Cadet Heinrich! Don’t you know how to make a proper bed? Where were you brought up, in a pigsty, you Knob head?” Upperclassman Seth Murray was fairly screaming at James. It was the customary Friday morning room inspection that the upperclassmen held to haze the first year Cadets, who were known as Knob heads because of the close hair cuts, although for all-male military schools like the Citadel it was deemed “shaping up” the incoming class. It was part of an overall disciplinary approach intended to break down their individuality in order to meld them into a unified body of classmates and potential future military men; men who would obey orders and someday literally give their lives for their comrades in some war in a distant land.

“No, *Sir!*” barked James back to the upperclassman.

“What do you mean, ‘No Sir?’” yelled Murray who had moved so that his face and the bill of his military cap pushed up within a few inches of James’s face. He had to stand on his toes in order to be at the same height as James, who was standing at attention with all the six feet, one inch he could muster.

“No *Sir!* I was not born in a pigsty, *Sir!*” barked back James.

“Well, the way you made that bed sure looks like you were! Three demerits for you Cadet Heinrich! At next weeks room inspection I expect you will learn to make a proper bed –

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one that I can bounce a quarter off. Is that clear, Knob head Heinrich?" Murray barked with a bit of a sneer curled at one corner of his mouth.

"Yes, Sir!" answered James.

"Now that we understand each other, Cadet Heinrich, drop down and give me twenty!" ordered Murray. After James did the twenty pushups, counting each one out, he jumped up and stood at attention. Murray then turned on his heels and marched out of the room with the two other upperclassmen performing the inspection following.

Not until they left and closed the door behind them did James go to at ease and let out a "whew". He turned to his roommate, fellow Plebe Wally Turrell, who also dropped the attention position and was looking sympathetically toward James. James said, "Damn it to Hell! That's the first demerits I've received." Then rhetorically he asked, "What the hell is Murray's problem? That bed is made the same as every other week and it's tight as a virgin's pussy!"

"Ah, Murray probably got a 'Dear John' letter from his girlfriend and wanted to take it out on somebody", offered Wally.

"Oh well, nothing I can do about it", James said resigned, but still annoyed.

"Forget it, Hein", replied Turrell, "it's Friday night, let's go to the Frosty Frog and get a couple of cold beers and something to eat."

"You go ahead, Wally, I've got a letter to write. When I'm done I'll meet you there. Hopefully if that bag of piss Murray is there, when I get there, he will be in a better frame of mind."

After Wally left, James sat down at his desk and started to write a letter to Rafe and Bo.

Hi Bo and Rafe,

It was really good to hear from you guys. Your letters came at a welcome time as life in the Citadel is so very different from those high school years and I admit to being a bit homesick remembering the good times we had.

I'm really sad about Joe killing himself—just don't understand it. Why? I keep asking myself that question. Maybe we'll never know, but when something like that happens to someone you think you know so well and never in a thousand years would expect it to occur, it really leaves you with that one question - why the hell did he do it?

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Life here is OK; I can handle the hazing, but the class work is harder than anything we had in high school. I'm a bit pissed off as I just got my first 3 demerits tonight and the S.O.B. upperclassman, Murray, who gave them to me, had no cause for it; he just wanted to be a prick. I'm going to head down now to the Frosty Frog and get a beer; if I run into that piss-ant Murray, I hope he doesn't give me any shit because I might just haul off and deck him - ah, I know I can't do that because it would screw me good and besides I don't want to give him the satisfaction of getting me suspended or expelled.

The other negative is the lack of female companionship. I never thought I'd get so horny, but I woke up after a wet dream the other night, dreaming of doing the horizontal mambo with Sue Barlow. And us Cadets are not even allowed to consort with the few skanks down at the Frosty Frog; if we get caught it's enough demerits to put us on suspension.

Oh, about Thanksgiving - I won't be able to get home for that, as we have drills scheduled up until the day before and then again that weekend, so it wouldn't make much sense for me to try to get home and back just for a day.

OK, guys, stay in touch, and I hope to get home for Christmas. Maybe we can make a trip to Staten Island then.

*Your Pal,
Hein*

Saturday afternoon, October 24, 1959...

The big Homecoming game was about to go into the fourth quarter with Milton College easily on top of Hiram College by 27 to 3 points. It was no contest. Head Coach Reed turned toward the bench and began picking out several substitutes. When Coach Reed pointed to him, Rafe jumped up, put on his helmet, and fairly flew to the coach's side, the adrenalin coursing through his system like a volcano about to erupt.

Coach Reed put his arm around Rafe's shoulder pads and said with a tone of encouragement, "OK, Cerny, I want you to go in there for Kerry Wilson at the next change of

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possessions and play defense as the right inside linebacker on the 5-4 and right defensive end on the 6-3. Then on offense you'll play right end. You got that?"

Rafe responded nervously, "Yes, coach, I got it!"

The whistle blew as the clock ran out on the third quarter with Milton on defense after having punted to Hiram. Coach Reed ordered, "Alright, Cerny, get in there and be agile, mobile and hit like a missile!" As he intentionally did in all of his pep talks, Coach Reed placed the emphasis on the last syllable of 'agile, mobile, and missile'; it was one of his pet phrases.

Rafe joined three other substitutes, who had been waiting to go into the game, and the four of them charged onto the field signaling the players they were replacing. Rafe felt like he was gliding on air as he ran to the defensive huddle.

Defensive captain Harold Falco called for a 6-3 defense, with six men on the defensive side of the line of scrimmage, three linebackers about four yards from the scrimmage line, and the two safeties back about ten yards behind the three linebackers. This was typically the call for anticipated running plays, but just in case the opponent tried a passing play, the linebackers and safeties cued on the offensive linemen, and then the quarterback. If the interior offensive linemen stood up instead of charging that was the first clue that it was probably a pass play and the defensive linemen and linebackers would yell out, "Pass! Pass!" to alert the safeties.

The Hiram squad broke the huddle and quickly came up to the line and got into their positions. Rafe was at right end in a crouched position with both arms slightly extended in front of him to ward off any player that might attempt to block him. The offensive halfback on Rafe's side was lined up as an outside flanker, about eight yards to Rafe's right and about three yards back from the line of scrimmage. The left offensive end initially came to the line immediately opposite Rafe, but then he took a side step to Rafe's right and Rafe knew immediately that this guy was attempting to get a better angle to block Rafe. Rafe surmised that the flanker was out there to attack the outside linebacker and that the offensive end was going to try and block Rafe in toward the center. "OK", Rafe said under his breath, "It looks just like that play we saw on the films from one of Hiram's previous games. The quarterback will take the snap from center, fake a handoff to the fullback running up the middle and then hand the ball to the other halfback, who will run around my end".

Before the Hiram quarterback could set his team, Rafe took a quick side step to his right so that he was now again directly opposite the opposing end's outside shoulder. As the opposing end quickly took another sidestep to Rafe's right, again to get a blocking angle, "I guessed right", Rafe thought to himself with a bit of a smile behind the face mask of his helmet. "I got you now", Rafe said under his breath.

The Hiram quarterback bellowed, "*Set*". Now none of the offensive players could move or they would draw a penalty. Rafe quickly side-stepped once more to the right taking away the angle from his opponent; he was again aligned at the outside shoulder of his opponent. There was now a gap of almost five yards between the tackles and Rafe and his opponent. The quarterback started to call the signals, "*Hut-One*", "*Hut-Two*", "*Hut-Three*".

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On the third ‘Hut’ the center snapped the ball to the quarterback. The opposing end had the advantage of knowing the snap count and lunged out toward Rafe. Rafe had been looking down the line from his crouched viewpoint and as soon as the center’s hand started to move the ball back between his legs, Rafe used his right arm and hand to push past his opponent, slicing in toward the tackle. The offensive end’s lunge out toward where Rafe had been could do nothing to stop Rafe. Rafe shot through the gap that had been opened by both he and his opponent side-stepping. Aside from a slight bump from his contact with the offensive end, Rafe was barely slowed down; he quickly emerged into the backfield and sighted the quarterback handing the ball to the halfback.

With two strides Rafe was almost up to full speed. The halfback had just gotten the handoff and taken one step, when he saw Rafe. Rafe could see the look of surprise in the runner’s eyes, the whites of them appearing like two large saucers surrounding the dark pupils. Rafe lowered his shoulders, buried his head into the runner’s side and wrapped his arms around the runner’s waist, driving his legs to finish off the tackle. “Oomph!” the halfback let out a gasp, as he landed on his back with Rafe on top.

Two more downs netted only seven yards for Hiram and they were forced to punt the ball back to Milton. Rafe played the whole fourth quarter and caught one pass for twelve yards and a first down. The final score was 30 to 3 and Milton was guaranteed a winning season with their record now at 5 wins 3 losses with just two games remaining.

When the clock ran out and the Head Umpire blew the whistle signaling the end of the game, Rafe walked off the field, helmet in hand. He caught up with Ricky Briggs and walked with him to the sideline. “Nice game, today, Rafe”, offered Ricky, “That tackle you made on that first play of the fourth quarter was a joy to watch. I heard Coach Reed yelp like a happy puppy when you knifed through and made the tackle for a six yard loss.”

“Thanks, Ricky, it felt good to get a clean tackle like that on my first play”, responded Rafe. “I’m glad I got to play today”.

“Do you have a date for the Homecoming dance tonight?” asked Ricky.

Rafe sighed and replied, “Nah, I haven’t had much time for dating, what with three-hour afternoon labs twice a week, football practice and games, studying three to four hours a night and Saturday morning classes. Majoring in Physics is tough, and takes a lot of studying. High School was a breeze compared to this. I have a number of students from Ohio and Connecticut in my classes and they seem to have had better preparation in the sciences than we got at Quaytown.”

“Maybe so”, replied Ricky, “I’m glad that I’m majoring in Business Admin. Don’t publicize what I’m about to tell you, but if you join our fraternity next semester, we do have a file of recent mid-term and final exams for a lot of the courses. They can help you get an edge on studying for the tests.” Then he added in a confidential manner, “Heck, sometimes we even get an advanced copy of the actual exam” and he laughed.

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“How can you get a copy before the exam”, Rafe asked naively.

Ricky looked around to be sure no one else was in ear shot and with a wink said, “Well, sometimes a professor’s assistant happens to leave a stencil in a garbage pail and one of our brothers just happens to find it before the trash is picked up.”

“Oh”, is all Rafe could say. He had heard stories about cheating in college, but it had never occurred to him that it could be that easy. He and Ricky walked back to the field house, showered and then Rafe went back to the freshman dorm.

On the walk back, Rafe reflected on the past several days of activities in campus life, leading up to Homecoming Weekend. There had been parties thrown by the various Greek Fraternities and Sororities, for returning alumni and other guests. There was the building of floats by each of the Sororities and Fraternities. Through Ricky, Rafe had been invited to help in the building of the Delta Alpha Sigma float that was built at a barn on a farm out of town owned by an alumnus and former Delta Alpha.

But the most interesting event to Rafe was the Sorority Serenade on Wednesday night, where each of the Sororities put up a candidate for Homecoming Queen and made the rounds of the Fraternity Houses and the dorms, performing a serenade presenting their candidate. Each Sorority had a unique theme; one Rafe especially like was based on the book and movie, “The World of Suzie Wong”.

Then on Thursday, the campus voted on who would be Homecoming Queen for the Homecoming parade and game on Saturday. This year’s queen was from the Chi Zeta Sorority. She was decked out in a tight fitting white sequined gown complete with arm length white gloves and the proverbial bouquet of red roses. She sat up on the rear seat of a white 1958 Buick convertible, along with the guy who was President of the Student Body They were in the last vehicle in the parade of floats that traveled through the main streets around the campus and on into the athletic stadium. There was a ceremony during halftime, but the football team was in the field house and was oblivious to it.

As he walked up the steps to the dorm, Rafe felt contented, but a bit tired as his body was feeling the aches and bruises from the game. “Well”, he thought, “that’s the third varsity game I’ve gotten in; not bad for a freshman. One thing’s for sure, not only is there more studying involved in college, but football is definitely a step up with the players generally bigger and stronger.” He was still debating whether he should have taken the invitation to tryout as a pitcher with the baseball Dodgers at the end of August, but he couldn’t have done that and come out to Milton for football camp. He decided that he might never know if he made the right decision, especially since the Brooklyn Dodgers were now the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Friday Evening, November 27, 1959...

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Rafe was relating how he had taken his first ever airplane flight to get home for the Thanksgiving holiday, flying from Ohio to Newark Airport in an Alleghany Airlines twin-turbine prop plane that seats 30 people, when on the radio, tuned to WABC AM, came the following song...

*Our guardian star lost all his glow
The day that I lost you
He lost all his glitter the day you said, no
And his silver turned to blue
Like him, I am doubtful that your love is true
But if you decide to call on me
Ask for Mr. Blue*

*I'm Mr. Blue (wah-a-wah-oooh)
When you say you love me (ah, Mr. Blue)
Then prove it by goin' out on the sly
Provin' your love isn't true
Call me Mr. Blue*

*I'm Mr. Blue (wah-a-wah-oooh)
When you say you're sorry (ah, Mr. Blue)
Then turn around, head for the lights of town
Hurtin' me through and through
Call me Mr. Blue*

*I stay at home at night (I stay at home)
Right by the phone at night (right by the phone)
But you won't call
And I-I won't hu-urt my pride (call me Mr)*

*I won't tell you (wah-a-wah-oooh)
Why you paint the town (ah, Mr. Blue)
A bright red to turn it upside down
I'm paintin' it too
But I'm paintin' it blue
Call me Mr. Blue (wah-a-wah-oooh)
Call me Mr. Blue (wah-a-wah-oooh)*

“That song really gets to me. Damn it all! I really screwed up. I really liked them both so much, but I still can’t decide whether I’d rather be with Cathy or Martha. I’m really sad that I lost both of them,” Bo was relating his sense of misery as the song “Mr. Blue” by the Fleetwoods ended on the radio.

Rafe was driving his parents ’56 Ford with Bo, Nathan and Jimmy Barrone as passengers. They had just come up the shallow hill on Front Street into the center of downtown Quaytown.

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Nathan and Jimmy were in the back seat. When Rafe heard what Bo had said he looked over at him and saw that Bo had slid down in the seat so that his knees were up against the dash board. His arms were folded in front of him. Like Bo, Rafe and Jimmy were wearing their jackets that they were given by the Quaytown Mothers' Club for winning the Seacoast Baseball Championship last spring. They each had their varsity letters sewn on the front. Nathan was wearing a three-quarter length car coat. It was cool out this evening, so the car heater was on despite the fact that they all wore sweaters under their jackets.

Rafe still carried feelings for Cathy, although he had finally realized that it could never be. Despite that he felt some empathy for his friend Bo, plus he was curious. He asked, "Let's say you had to make a choice, Bo. What did you like most about each of them? And what did you like the least?"

"Well, let me think", Bo responded as he looked up at the roof of the car, obviously trying to delve into his feelings. About thirty seconds passed when Bo sat up, turned in his seat, looked over at Rafe and said, "Cathy is more of an extemporaneous girl, lots of fun to be with, outgoing personality, and great at making out; but she likes to play the field and has had a lot of boyfriends. On the other hand Martha is more serious, not as uninhibited or 'experienced' as Cathy, and she and I are both Italian and Catholic; so if I were looking at it from which one would I most like to marry I'd pick Martha." Then as if to lessen the impact of that observation, Bo said with more emphasis, "But not that I'm saying I *want* to get married, just that *if* I were, I'd prefer it was Martha".

From the back seat, Jimmy laughed and said, "So, you'd like to bang Cathy, but have little Orechios with Martha?"

That cracked up the four of them. Still laughing, Bo added, "I guess that about sums it up, Jimmy".

Several minutes passed and by now they had driven out of the downtown Quaytown area, when the conversation turned to yesterday's Thanksgiving Day game. Rafe initiated it by observing, "I'm glad we got to see Quaytown beat Mason yesterday. That fifty-five yard pass from Bradley to Hearn was a beauty. It was the old 57 play we used to run; the offensive line gave Bradley enough time to look downfield and pass to Hearn and then Hearn ran right past the safety for the TD."

From the back, Jimmy laughed and interjected, "Yeah, last year with me playing center and that big Mason guy running over me, I'd turn around and see Bo either running for his life or flat on his ass; he'd either have gotten rid of the ball too soon or had to eat it for a sack."

"Yeah, I took my lumps in more than a few games. At first I thought you guys on the offensive line were pissed off at me for something, then I realized you guys couldn't block my grandmother; the front line was like a sieve unless I made a good fake on a play action pass play," Bo responded jokingly, turning around towards the rear.

"What'd you want from a center that only weighed 145 pounds?" laughed Jimmy.

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“But the game programs had you listed at 155 pounds”, Bo responded sarcastically.

Rafe jumped in smiling, “You know that’s because Coach Ruffy always added five to ten pounds and an inch or two for all of us.”

“Yeah, I know. Tell me about it,” Bo laughed back.

“I thought we were talking about this year’s football team, not you losers from last year,” Nathan, who had been silently listening to the banter, chimed in with an attempt at sarcastic humor.

“Ah, now Nathan, you know we would have won last year if that referee hadn’t blown the call when we scored a touchdown,” Rafe replied. “But it sure was cold up in the stands and I was glad you brought that pint of blackberry brandy.”

“Damn right,” Bo followed, “that warmed me up enough to handle the cold!”

Nathan interjected, “I was happy to oblige. It sure was freakin’ cold when the wind blew into the stands. I only regret that I didn’t wear two pairs of socks.”

“Yeah, well we should have said something to you about that. We are used to wearing two pairs for football games – cuts down on the blisters when you’re wearing those cleats”, offered Bo.

“So, did everyone have a hearty Thanksgiving meal after the game?” asked Jimmy.

“Damned if I didn’t stuff my face like there was no tomorrow”, Bo responded, “I don’t think I’ll eat for a week”.

“Yeah, I overdid the seconds and the pumpkin pie”, Rafe offered.

No one realized that Nathan did not offer a reply. It just didn’t occur to them that Nathan, living in the more or less segregated Negro section of Quaytown, in a small ran-shackled cottage, perhaps did not have a multi-course Thanksgiving dinner with all of the trimmings.

Saturday Evening, November 28, 1959...

The weather warmed up a bit this night, with temps in the mid-forties. Bo was riding down Ridge Street in his cousin Dom’s ’53 Mercury. They were heading toward the center of Quaytown planning on stopping at Stosh’s diner for coffee and a donut, when Bo spotted Mary Lou Walsh walking her dog in the same direction. Mary Lou had a reputation as a “fast” girl. She was a senior at QHS now.

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“Stop!” Bo ordered his cousin. “Quick, pull over to the curb by that girl walking the dog.”

“What the...?” responded Dom. But he caught Bo’s urgency and pulled over ahead of Mary Lou.

Bo, smoking a cigarette, rolled down the partially open window all the way and leaned out to signal Mary Lou to stop for a conversation.

“Hi there, Mary Lou, what are you up to tonight?” asked Bo in a friendly, but insinuating voice. He threw out the remains of his cigarette into the gutter.

“Oh, Hi Bo, I didn’t know it was you at first. I thought it might be some creep trying to pick me up”, replied Mary Lou matter-of-factly. Then she came over closer to the car and smiled at Bo, pulling her dog by the leash toward the car. “I was just walking my dog, Betsy, and then going home. What are you two doing, tonight? Just cruisin’ around?”

Bo said nonchalantly, “We were headed for Stosh’s diner. But now that I’ve seen you I’d much rather you got in the car and let’s play a little”.

“Oh, Bo, don’t get fresh!” Mary Lou responded with mock annoyance. “I really do have to get home.”

“But just for a little while?” Bo asked in a coy appeal.

Mary Lou hesitated a bit then replied somewhat uncertainly, “Oh, that might be nice, but really I should be getting on home, and besides I have Betsy here. She might get nervous in your friend’s car, and who is he anyway. I don’t think I know him.”

“Oh, this is my cousin, Dom. He’s a real nice guy. If you come into the car, he’ll watch your dog,” Bo pressed his case. He offered her a cigarette, but she shook her head “No”.

“Ah, I still don’t know. I don’t think I should”, Mary Lou said cautiously, “besides, where would we go, and how long? Because my parents will be worried if I’m out too long,”

“We’ll just go over to the floor tile factory where it’s quiet and private. I won’t keep you long. You can be home before your parents get concerned,” Bo said encouragingly.

Mary Lou said thoughtfully, “Uh, maybe I shouldn’t.” Then she shrugged her shoulders and lowered her voice so that only Bo would hear, simultaneously tugging on the impatient dog’s leash who was trying to pull away, “Maybe if you were by yourself?”

“Like I said”, Bo responded with a bit more urgency, “Dom will watch your dog when we get there, and it will actually only be the two of us in the car.”

“Oh, I just don’t know”, Mary Lou said hesitantly.

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Now Bo was getting impatient. “Listen to me”, he said softly but with a commanding tone, “You either get in the car, or I’ll hurt Betsy.”

“You wouldn’t!” Mary Lou said in disbelief.

Bo got out of the car and opened the rear passenger side door. “Do you want to try me?” Bo said with a smile, trying to soften the threat somewhat.

At that Mary Lou somewhat grudgingly got into the back seat with her dog and Bo slid in beside her. Dom knowingly drove the few blocks to a street that dead-ended at the closed metal gate entrance to the floor tile factory. It was a favorite parking spot for kids, as there were no houses within two blocks and quite dark except for one light that shown on the entrance, but not out toward the street. Once parked, Dom dutifully opened the rear door, took Betsy’s leash from Mary Lou and began walking the dog up the street away from the factory.

Twenty minutes later, Mary Lou put her panties and pedal pusher pants back on, refastened her bra and pulled her sweater down and smoothed her hair. She looked over at Bo, who was zipping up the fly on his Levis and straightening his v-neck pullover. “You know, Bo”, Mary Lou said softly, “I always wondered what it would be like to do it with you, and it was really nice. You were such a catch in high school and now that you’ve graduated, I bet a lot of the girls would still like to go out with you.”

“Thank you. I enjoyed it tonight, too. Now we should bring you back so you can get home before your parents get worried”, Bo responded. Bo stepped out of the car and waived Dom back. Dom had been hanging back about a half block away and came quickly back with the dog, who was very happy to get back in the car with Mary Lou, licking her face and wagging its tail.

Several minutes later they dropped off Mary Lou and Betsy where they had picked her up on Ridge Street. Bo didn’t get out of the car, just rolled down the window and stuck his head out to say good night. Mary Lou leaned over from the curb and gave Bo a kiss. “Do you think we could do this again, Bo?” she asked almost wistfully, as if sensing that the answer might be one that she didn’t want to hear.

“Maybe”, Bo responded non-committing, “Like I told you, I’m just finishing up courses at Newark Prep and have been accepted at Queens College in Pennsylvania for the Spring Semester. So, I probably won’t be home very much.” Then seeing the look of disappointment on her face, “But when I’m home I will definitely look for you walking your dog. Okay?”

“Okay, Bo, good luck in school. You’re a great guy.” Mary Lou said, turned and walked away.

“Bo?” Dom said quietly as they watched Mary Lou walk away, “I may be your cousin, and I love you as a cousin, but don’t do that to me again. I don’t want to be your whore master. Next time I get some of the action, or I don’t play.”

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“Sorry, Dom, I would have invited you for sloppy seconds, but I got the feeling she wouldn’t go for it”, Bo answered. “She’ll be around. You can pick up by yourself sometime.”

“Hmmpf!” Dom replied, “I just may take a shot at that; although I probably don’t have your gift of bullshit.” And they both chuckled at that remark.

Saturday Evening, December 26, 1959...

Earle was home for the Christmas holiday. His parents had moved to Old Hickory, TN while Earle was partying away at LSC. It was semester break, and the fall semester was history. Earle would not be going back – he had passed a total of six credits out of eighteen.

While his parents were somewhat disappointed, they tried hard not to show it to him. They understood he was still younger than most boys who entered college and were proud that at least he had gotten a taste of college, something his dad and mom hadn’t had the luxury to attain. Besides, they sensed that Earle was bright enough to make it, if and when he was ready to try again. Meanwhile they were just happy to have him back with them. He would get a job and earn his keep until he was ready to try again.

For his part Earle was a bit down on himself. To assuage his conscience, and to divert himself from dwelling on his own disappointment, he preferred to remember some less painful events from his freshman college days that were indelibly etched in his memory. Like passing his seventeenth birthday getting shit-faced in that bar in Baton Rouge. Like watching and wondering if his hair would grow back after having to shave it off upon his first day on campus. It was part of the ritual freshman hazing that took place on just about every college campus in 1959. Like the friends he did make and the nights of partying and his walk-on tryout for one of the biggest and best college football teams, known nationally for their history and excellence in the sport.

But he couldn’t help the thought that maybe if he had applied himself more, if he had taken up with another student who would have been a better influence, he might have passed more of his courses and would have been going back after semester break was over. He didn’t know then, but it would be more than a year before he’d be ready to give college another shot. Like a lot of young men coming out of high school, who in those days were shy and more innocent than not, he needed some time to grow up.

That same night, James was driving his dad’s car to pick up Rafe. He had already picked up Bo. He was feeling somewhat ambivalent. On the one the hand he was sort of proud of how he looked in his military school uniform. He smiled to himself remembering how he looked in

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the mirror at home in full blue-grey woolen military dress. The Eisenhower style jacket, with a tight Nehru like collar and tails down the rear, had embroidered black striping embossed in seven rows across the chest with three columns of brass buttons aligned on the rows of black striping – one column down the center that were actual buttons that kept the tunic closed and a column of sewed on buttons down each side of the chest at the ends of the rows of striping. The pants had creases that any tailor would be proud of with a light blue stripe down the sides. Then there were the finishing touches of the white gloves and the hat with the chin strap that sat across the front of the chin.

On the other hand he knew he had to make a decision and it had to be soon. But he shook off the thought and brought himself back to the situation at hand. They would pick up Rafe and then they would head over to Staten Island to sort of celebrate their getting together again after these four months. They were still well under twenty-one so Staten Island it was, and besides it had become kind of a ritual since their senior year in high school.

Bo was saying something, which brought James out of his reverie. "...so Hein, how did your first semester at the Citadel go? I must say you look impressive in that uniform."

"I managed OK", James replied in a subdued voice. "It's not exactly what I expected. I mean the studies, not the military aspects...that I like, but the course work is a bit much. I don't think Quaytown High School was enough preparation, you know what I mean?"

"Yeah, I think so", Bo agreed. "In my case I just didn't take enough College Prep courses, and that's why I just finished taking additional courses at Newark Prep. Plus there was that one spring session in Quaytown when I got a bad grade. But at least the good news is that I have been accepted at Queens College for the Spring System."

"Way to go, Bo!" replied James, happy for his friend.

A few minutes later they pulled up outside Rafe's house. "You go to the door and I'll stay in the car", Bo said, "I want Rafe to see you in the uniform when he opens the door. Oh, and don't forget the hat!"

James walked up the sidewalk to the front door of Rafe's house and pushed the white button to ring the bell. He only had to wait a minute before it was opened by Rafe who nodded for him to step into the living room. The look on Rafe's face was one of amazement. It was all James could do to keep a straight, serious face. Rafe's parents welcomed James and they showed their approval for his appearance.

"Holy cow, Hein, you must have grown two inches since I last saw you!" Rafe finally said, still appreciating how James looked in the military garb.

"Aw, it's more that I learned how to square my shoulders and stand up straight", responded James self-effacingly.

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“Well, whatever, you sure look good,” Rafe said. With that they said their goodbyes to Rafe’s parents and went to join Bo in the car, Rafe getting into the back seat.

“So what do you think of our man, ‘General Heinrich?’” asked Bo as they pulled away from Rafe’s house.

“I’m absolutely impressed! Damned if he isn’t two inches taller and more sharp looking than I’ve ever seen him”, Rafe answered Bo, leaning forward and giving James a couple of congratulatory taps on the shoulder.

“I thought we’d go to the Totten Villa tavern on the Island tonight. OK with you, Bo and Rafe?” James inquired as they headed up the highway toward the Parkway.

Bo and Rafe both agreed and they were on their way. The three of them had a rollicking evening, swapping stories of the events of the past four months, drinking beer (James as the driver nursed three drafts), sharing a pizza, and by the time they headed back to New Jersey, each of them felt as if it was like old times.

Later that night, James made his decision. He would not be going back to the Citadel. “No, I think I’ll join the Marines”, he decided as he drifted off to sleep.

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Events: Spring Semester 1960...

On January 3 - U.S. Senator John F. Kennedy (D-MA) announced that he is a candidate for the Democratic nomination for President of the U.S. On January 9, construction began on the Aswan Dam in Egypt to harness power from the Nile. On January 24, a major insurrection began in Algeria against French Colonial policy.

On February 1, In Greensboro, North Carolina, four black students from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University began a sit-in at a segregated Woolworth's lunch counter. Although they were refused service, they were allowed to stay at the counter. The event triggered many similar nonviolent protests throughout the Southern United States, and six months later the original four protesters are served lunch at the same counter. On February 9, Actress Joanne Woodward received the first star on the new Hollywood Walk of Fame. On that same day Adolph Coors III, Chairman of the Board of Coors Brewery Company was kidnapped for a ransom of \$500,000; he was later found dead. On February 13, France tested its first atomic bomb in the Sahara desert.

On March 3, Elvis Presley returned home from Germany after serving two years. On March 6, the U.S. announced that 3,500 troops will be sent to Vietnam. On March 17, 1960, the Eisenhower administration agreed to a recommendation from the CIA to equip and drill Cuban exiles for action against the new Castro government. Eisenhower stated that it was the policy of the U.S. government to aid anti-Castro guerilla forces. The CIA began to recruit and train anti-Castro forces in the Sierra Madre Mountains on the Pacific coast of Guatemala.

On March 21, under Apartheid in South Africa, the Afrikaner police opened fire on unarmed black South African demonstrators, killing 69 and wounding 180 in the Sharpeville massacre. On March 22, the first patent for a laser was granted to Arthur Leonard Schawlow and Charles Hard Townes.

On April 1, the U.S. launched its first weather satellite, TIROS-1. On April 4, the first three female priests were ordained in Sweden. On April 27, Togo received its independence from the French administered UN trusteeship.

On May 1, A Soviet missile shot down an American Lockheed U2 spy plane; the pilot Francis Gary Powers was captured; later on the 16th at the Big Four Summit in Paris, Nikita Krushchev demanded an apology from President Eisenhower. On May 6, President Eisenhower signed the Civil Rights Act of 1960 into law. On May 9, the FDA approved the sale of the birth control pill. On May 9, the nuclear submarine USS *Nautilus* completed the first underwater circumnavigation of the Earth. On May 11, four Israeli Mossad agents abducted fugitive Nazi Adolph Eichmann in Buenos Aires and brought the war criminal back for sentencing.

On June 15, violent demonstrations at Tokyo University resulted in 182 arrests, 589 injuries. On June 30, the Belgian Congo gained independence from Belgium; civil war followed.

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Wednesday evening, May 10, 1960...

*Scotch and soda, mud in your eye.
Baby, do I feel high,
Oh, me, oh, my. Do I feel high.
Dry martini, jigger of gin.
Oh, what a spell you've got me in,
oh, my. Do I feel high.
People won't believe me.
They'll think that I'm just braggin'.
But I could feel the way I do
and still be on the wagon.*

All I need is one of your smiles.
Sunshine of your eyes,
oh, me, oh, my. Do I feel high.

The Kingston Trio's song, Scotch and Soda was playing on the radio. Bo's sister Mary Ann was listening to it while drying the dinner dishes. Bo was sitting at the kitchen table at home in Quaytown, writing a letter to Rafe and James...

Hi guys,

I'm writing this from home because I've had to drop out of Queen's College due to some weird stomach ailment called colitis. Never heard of this thing, but it acts like diarrhea, only it goes on and on for days at a time. The doctor at the school infirmary put me on various medicines, but after two weeks, told me to go home. Our family doctor diagnosed it and now has me on some new medicine that finally seems to be working, but I barely passed the mid-terms and now I'm too far behind to catch up with the finals starting in a couple weeks. I'm disappointed, but oh, well, that's the way it goes; not much I can do about it; just need to get better and look for work and maybe go back in the Fall.

There was one wild thing that happened when I first went up to Queens in Pennsylvania. Jimmy Barrone and Tim Longly drove me up to school in Tim's car and the fog was so dense when we hit the Pocono Mountains, you could not see more than 20 feet ahead. So Jimmy said, "Stop the Car" and he got out and sat on the hood of the car and gave Tim hand signals. I thought I was going to have a heart attack. All I could think of was Jimmy sliding off the car and the car rolling over him, or that a truck would plow into us. Fortunately, the fog cleared after we got down the other side of the mountain and nothing bad happened.

It was good to see Rafe over Spring Break. He came home from Milton and we got together with Nathan on a couple trips to the Island. But Jimmy Barrone wound up in the hospital with mono. Rafe, Nathan and I went to visit him at Riverside Hospital. Apparently he was overdoing things; two jobs, basketball and a high class load at Glenboro. At the hospital we saw his sister, Margie. God damn, but she is sweet looking; pretty face, dimpled cheeks, great smile and what a nice set of tits. It's really hard to keep your eyes from staring at her chest.

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Rafe and I were thinking back to a joke Hein told us about playing windshield wipers across a gal's chest.

I heard from Burn the other day – he called; he sends his regards. He's working in an auto store – seems like a decent job what with how he loves cars. Says he's not dating anyone, so he's getting lots of practice with 'Mary Hand'. I kidded him about that, told him he needs to get some wet pussy so he can experience the real thing and not wind up as the world's oldest male virgin. Back in March, Burn had come up to visit with me for a weekend at Queens College from Tennessee. My roommate went home for the weekend and Burn stayed in my dorm room. We went out to the local pub and both of us got shit-faced.

Hein, I still can't get over you leaving the Citadel and joining the marines back in January. I hope the duty down there in camp Lejuene isn't as tough as boot camp on Parris Island, where the drill sergeant had you crawling through the mud and swamps. I guess by now you will be getting assigned somewhere else soon, if you haven't already. Let us know where you're going to wind up or where you may have already been reposted. I'm guessing the Marines will forward this to you wherever you are. I am betting our country is in good hands if the rest of the marines are like you.

Well, that's about it for now. My sister, Mary Ann, is finished with the dishes and wants me to get out of the kitchen so she can wipe down the table. She's giving me that look of hers which says she's getting annoyed. Got to Go. Keep in touch.

*Your Pal,
Bo*

Saturday Evening, May 24, 1960...

Upon his return at the end of the spring semester in late May, Rafe announced to his parents that he would not be going back in the Fall for the sophomore year. He had told his parents that he wanted to work for a year to earn some money in order to help pay for some of his college expenses. It was not exactly a lie, after all his parents had taken out a loan to pay for his first year and were prepared to do so again for each subsequent year. Rafe knew that it was a burden on his folks and a part of him felt like he should help out some.

But that wasn't the whole story, he would admit under questioning. The fact was that he was somewhat disappointed in himself. In the first semester he had made the Dean's List with better than a grade point of 3.0, the equivalent of a 'B' average. He did that while playing football. In the Spring semester, while joining the Delta Alpha Sigma fraternity and playing on the varsity baseball team, his grades went down to where he earned a measly 'D' in three of his classes. He barely avoided being put on academic probation.

In attempting to understand why he had let down, it dawned on him that he had spent much too much time and effort experiencing the fraternity life and not enough on studies; and yet the studies had become a real challenge, much harder in the spring semester, than in the fall semester. Basically he just gave up and decided that he was not cut out for becoming an electrical engineer. So, if that course of study was out, then what did he want to do? Here then was his dilemma – he had not as yet figured out what different course of study he wanted to

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attempt. Thus, his decision to drop out a year, find work to earn some money, and moreover to “find himself”.

Like Earle, Rafe was a bit naïve and were the first in their families to even go on to college; in Rafe’s case that included myriads of cousins, many of whom were younger and perhaps looking to Rafe to set the example. Both had no siblings on whom to draw for comparison of attitudes, ambitions, and plain old communication. And like Earle’s parents, Rafe’s mom and dad were supportive and hid well any disappointment they had.

At about 5:00 PM the phone rang in Rafe’s house. Rafe was in his room listening to some 45’s on his phonograph. His mom called to him to say that James was on the phone, so Rafe went out to the kitchen, picked up the phone and said, “Hey, Hein, what’s up? Where are you calling from?”

Over the connection, James responded, “Hi Rafe. Guess what? I’m home on two weeks leave before I have to report back to the barracks in D.C. If you’re up for it, Bo and I are going to cruise around tonight – scapping for babes; we can pick you up. What do you say?”

“Whoa, Hein”, Rafe replied, “first off, did you say D.C.? I thought you were stationed at Lejuene?”

“I was, but I’ve been reposted to D.C. I’ll explain when I see you later, that is, if you’re in”, James answered.

“I’m in! What time will you be here?” Rafe queried, only too glad for the opportunity to get out of the house. His attitude was swiftly on the upswing; he had been feeling a bit morose about dropping out of college.

“We’ll be there about 7:00 PM, OK?” James said.

“OK, I’ll be ready”, Rafe responded and hung up.

“What was that all about?” asked Rafe’s mom, Millie, still the involved parent. Rick, Rafe’s father, had gotten out of his chair to listen in as well.

“Oh, just that Hein and Bo are coming by at 7:00 tonight and we’re going out to just drive around some.” Rafe was still a bit uneasy about being too candid with his parents about some of his activities.

“Well, how is Bo feeling? Has he gotten over that stomach problem?” queried Mrs. Cerny.

“Yeah, he said he’s fully recovered and feels back to normal,” replied Rafe.

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“Oh, good; I’m happy for Bo”, his mom said with a smile. “OK, but don’t be too late.” And then as almost an after thought, “We trust you won’t get into any trouble.” Rafe’s father nodded.

“Not to worry, Mom and Dad, we are just going to drive around and catch up. Hein is home on leave from the Marines. We haven’t seen him in months”, Rafe said to placate any concerns his parents might have.

A few minutes after 7:00 James drove up to Rafe’s house and he and Bo came to the door. Rafe had been watching for them and had the door ajar as they came up the walk. When they entered the living room, Rafe’s mom gave them both a hug and his dad shook their hands.

Rafe’s dad said, “Bo, I want you to know that I used to see some of your high school baseball games and I think you should have gotten a scholarship. You were a great catcher.”

“Gee, thanks, Mr. Cerny, that’s really nice to hear”, Bo replied pleased by the compliment, yet a bit embarrassed.

“Well, I mean it”, Mr. Cerny replied.

“You all look so handsome”, Rafe’s mom said earnestly, “now go have a good time, but please drive safe.”

“We will”, answered James. And the three young men left, Bo in the front passenger seat and Rafe in the rear.

As they drove away, Rafe couldn’t hold his curiosity any longer. “OK, Hein, now fill me in on why you are being reposted to D.C.?”

James glanced at Rafe in the rear view mirror, as he turned off Rafe’s street, and said not without a touch of satisfaction, “I’ve been picked to be in the Marine Ceremonial Guard, which is more commonly called the ‘Honor Guard’, which means I get to be a military guard for a lot of the politicians and whoever is in the White House.”

“No shit!” Rafe exclaimed. “Why, that’s fantastic! You must be proud as hell of that. And your parents must be thrilled, too.”

“Yeah, all of that”, replied James, modestly.

Bo turned partly around in the front seat and said sincerely, “God damn, but it’s good to see one of us get that kind of honor. I know I’m proud of you, Hein!” Then to make light of the situation, he added after a brief pause, “You can come guard me anytime, Hein, and I know that I will feel as safe as a baby in his mother’s arms.” That brought a laugh from the three of them.

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Saturday Evening, June 4, 1960...

*(now and then there's a fool such as I)
Pardon me, if I'm sentimental
When we say goodbye
Don't be angry with me should I cry
When you're gone, yet I'll dream
A little dream as years go by
Now and then there's a fool such as I*

*Now and then there's a fool such as I am over you
You taught me how to love
And now you say that we are through
I'm a fool, but I'll love you dear
Until the day I die
Now and then there's a fool such as I*

The Elvis song, “Now and Then There’s a Fool Such As I” was playing on the juke box. Rafe was sitting in a booth across from Jack Pauley. They were drinking cokes with French fries and smoking Tarreyton cigarettes, the ones advertised on TV showing a guy with a black eye saying, “I’d rather fight than switch.” Jack had taken up smoking when he went off to Glenboro College in the fall, but Rafe had never smoked until a few weeks ago, after returning home from Milton College. Inhaling still made him a bit dizzy. Rafe had told Jack about seeing James when he was home on leave and how James had been chosen for the Honor Guard. He had also admitted that he wasn’t too happy with his second semester grades and that he was going to take a year off and work. Then he went silent for a couple of minutes, dwelling on his feelings of disappointment.

“I’m not going back to college, either”, announced Jack, “I’ve decided it’s just a waste of time. They can’t teach me anything I can’t learn on my own by just reading.”

Jack’s words shook Rafe out of his reverie, “So, what do you plan to do this summer and come September?” Rafe queried.

Jack looked up at the ceiling pensively as he exhaled smoke rings and replied with a shrug of his shoulders, “I think I’ll just bum around for the summer; maybe hang out at the pool in Kingsboro. And I’ll borrow my mom’s Ford whenever I want to cruise around looking for some available snatch who might want some lovin’. Then after the summer, I’ll think about getting a job.”

Rafe absorbed Jack’s reply, and then added, “My folks had a contact from Tom’s Tavern and I’ll be learning to drive a Mr. Softee ice cream truck for the summer. And I saw in the Quaytown Weekly that a baseball team is being formed in Holmvale, so I’m going to try out for them. They’re called the Darts”.

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“Good for you. As for me, I’ve had it with sports; tried some basketball at Glenboro on the Junior Varsity, and it was not very fulfilling”, Jack added with the corner of his mouth curled up in his customary smirk.

“Ok, Jack, I’m heading home. I’ve got a training session with one of the owners of that Mr. Softee business tomorrow and I’m supposed to start on Monday with one of the other drivers showing me the route and giving me pointers.” Rafe said as he crushed out his cigarette and slid out of the booth. The two of them said goodnight and went their separate ways.

Saturday Afternoon, July 16, 1960...

The “Theme from a Summer Place” was playing on the portable transistor radio that Bo brought to the beach at Sea Bright. Bo, Rafe, James and Nathan were camped out on a couple of blankets that they had spread on the sand, conveniently positioned halfway between the surf and one of the three watering holes that attracted local crowds and visitors alike from among the beach goers. The bar that was the easiest of the three to get served under age was the Danish Hop. It was also the one where a number of older guys and gals from Quaytown frequented.

Bo and Nathan had driven down to Rafe’s house in Bo’s blue, two-seater TR3. Rafe had driven the three of them to the beach at Sea Bright in the green 1951 Hudson Hornet that Rafe’s dad had recently bought for him from a fellow worker for fifty dollars. They were totally amazed when James had showed up and walked up to them on the beach.

“Ten-Hut!” James barked at the three of them in a mock call to attention, as he stood over the blanket.

“What the hell? How did you get here?” asked a surprised Bo.

“How did you know we were here?” asked Nathan.

James answered, “First I called Bo’s house and his brother, Chet, said that Bo had left in his car, but he didn’t know where he went. Then I called Rafe’s house and Mrs. Cerny said that the three of you had just left to go to the beach. So, I borrowed the family car and voila, here I am.”

“Hein, it’s great to see you!” Rafe said to James. “But how’d you manage to get home from D.C? And when do you have to be back?”

“Well, when I got the word that I could get a three day pass, right after duty yesterday afternoon, I got my ass in gear, picked up a duffel bag and a cardboard sign that said ‘New Jersey’, that I had previously prepared, got a ride to the highway with a local jar head, and stuck out my thumb. Six hours later I was dropped off at the Quaytown diner and walked home from there.”

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“Six hours from D.C. hitchhiking? Wow! That must be a record,” Rafe exclaimed. “As I remember when we went to D.C. on the senior trip, the bus ride was over four hours.”

“Well, I guess when you’re wearing a Marine uniform, and you stick out your thumb near the camp, it’s a cinch. The uniform acts like flypaper; who wouldn’t feel safe picking up a U.S. fighting Marine?” James responded with a laugh.

“Yeah, and you don’t have to worry about some homo picking you up”, interjected Bo. And they all laughed.

“Are you still playing baseball this summer, Rafe?” asked James, who was always a big baseball fan and followed his Phillies relentlessly.

Rafe responded, “Nope. I played six games with the Holmvale Darts and in the sixth game, the coach ended the season for us. He is an old Italian farmer from Holmvale who started the team so that his fifteen year old son would have a team to play on. The man was a bit whacky and had yelled at umpires in every game when they made a call against the team and especially against his son. Then in that last game he argued a call that was obvious to everyone else the right call by the umpire. But ole’ ‘Lefty’ as we knick named him pulled our team off the field in protest. We wound up forfeiting the game and half the team felt that it was the last straw and up and quit. Bye, bye team!”

“Damn shame!” James said and after a brief pause on request from Bo, he began to relate some stories about boot camp on Parris Island and his months at Lejuene before being stationed in D.C..

“Ok, enough with the war stories”, interjected Nathan. “Anyone else thirsty? I’m going to the Hop for a beer. Since we can’t drink on the beach, who’s going with me?”

Bo and Rafe jumped up from the blanket and collectively said “Count me in”.

“I’m game”, added James. And the four of them walked barefoot over the hot sand to the back door of the Hop. As they entered though the rear screen door they heard the ending of “Only the Lonely (Know How I Feel)” playing on the juke box, the new hit from Roy Orbison...

*...(Dum, dum, dum, dumdy-do, ah)
(Whoa, yeah, yeah, yeah-yaa)
(Oh, whoa, whoa, whoa-oow, ah-ah)
(Only the lonely)
(Only the lonely)

Only the lonely
Know the heartaches I've been through
Only the lonely know I cry and cry for you
May be tomorrow
A new romance*

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*No more sorrow
But that's the chance
You've gotta take
If you're lonely heartbreak
Only the lonely*

Nathan led the way to four empty seats on the right side of the bar and the four of them pulled up bar stools, took off their sunglasses and put them down on the bar along with their wallets. The bar maid, Vivian, who was called Vi, came over. “What’ll y’all have?”

Four beers were ordered and served in the typical eight ounce bar glasses with their fluted, tapered cylinder forms and a donut shaped bottom. The four of them had chatted for a while over several beers, when another patron across the way began talking about politics. They didn’t know his name, but he was telling Vi, the bar maid, that he was disappointed that a Catholic had been nominated for President at the Democratic National Convention earlier that week on July 11. He was ardently trying to make a case that a Roman Catholic could not win, since there had never been a Catholic President. For her part, Vi seemed unconvinced and responded several times that the young senator from Massachusetts was a dashing, handsome man with a lovely wife and attractive family.

“Hey, Bo, are you catching what that guy is saying?” asked James, who was sitting next to Bo, but not too loudly, so as to avoid getting brought into any argument with the guy across the way. “Of the four of us, you are the only Catholic; do you think a Catholic could be elected President?”

Bo thought for a second, then shrugged his shoulders and answered, “You know, Hein, I hadn’t thought about it much and this is not the first I’ve heard about it. My sister has been talking about it at home non-stop. She’s all excited about it, but my mom and dad are somewhat reserved. Personally I don’t see why a Catholic couldn’t win, if he’s the best candidate. Me, I’m for the best candidate.” Bo was being circumspect, since only Nathan was old enough to vote or drink in New Jersey and he did not want a slip of the tongue to bring attention to the fact that three of them were not yet twenty-one.

After the fourth round of beers, the four of them left a tip and walked back to the beach. A dip in the ocean, with the water temperature still on the cool side, shocked away any effect of the alcohol. As the afternoon wore down and the sun had deepened the tans on all but Nathan, who they joked with as being already dark, it became time to leave the beach and head home for the usual Saturday family dinner.

This was the fourth weekend that Bo and Rafe had made the trip to Sea Bright, since the beginning of June; most of the time Nathan accompanied them. They didn’t realize it at the time, but they were establishing a summer routine that would be repeated for the next two years. It would become the basis for a shared social life that would feature beach parties both days and nights and an occasional evening house party, nearly every weekend through the summer of 1962. A big part of that social life would be the melding of new friendships and romances with a

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group of young women and men that had graduated from Ruby Creek Catholic High and Centertown High, who also began hanging out on the beach at Sea Bright.

The balance of the summer zoomed by. Bo had gotten a job in June at the tile factory in Quaytown. His blue TR3 was the only car like it in the area, so that wherever he went with it, people knew that Bo was there, and while it was a good intro for meeting new girls, it was not very convenient for making out – it was just too cramped inside. By summer's end, Bo decided to sell it and bought his father's tan '54 Ford, after Mr. Orechio bought a new '60 Ford.

Earle was still working in the auto parts store in Old Hickory, TN. He had purchased a blue '56 Ford with a 312 Police Interceptor engine. He spent a good deal of his time working on his car. He added three two-barrel carburetors, a floor shift kit and "cherry bomb" glass packs on the dual exhaust. He also put in a reverberator on the radio. He had dated a couple of girls, but was still rather shy and inexperienced, but he loved to listen to the Tennessee girls talk "mountain talk", a slow country drawl that is unique to the area and a bit different than the drawl of those who dwell in the hollows. But oh, the food! In addition to fairly good BBQ, there were ham biscuits, turnip greens, and cornbread. Many a night he ate his fill, until he had to unbutton his levis and stretch out on a rocking chair. But as time wore on, he was beginning to think more and more about Bo, James and Rafe and the other friends he had made during the time he was in Quaytown.

In D.C. James had made friends with a black fellow marine, named James E. Tyler. One day when James, who had been out drinking with J.E. and another marine, decided he'd had enough and was going to return to the barracks by himself. A bit confused, he turned the wrong way upon leaving the bar and wandered into a bad neighborhood; he was soon accosted by several black fellows. J.E. as he liked to be called was a big muscular young man and came to the rescue. He had followed James as he knew that James was a bit drunk. He chased off the would-be muggers and escorted James back to the barracks.

As for Rafe, he was still working at driving a Mr. Softee truck, serving soft ice cream, like that at a Dairy Queen or Carvel drive up store. His route was mostly through sections of Kingsboro, North Kingsboro and Holmvale. He was paid a small salary plus a percentage on what was sold. He didn't mind the driving and selling to customers, but the prep work before going on the route and cleanup after finishing and bringing the truck back to the garage was not his favorite activities. For part of the prep work he had to pour a large ten gallon box of liquid ice cream mix into the top of the machine that refrigerated and dispensed the soft ice cream. Plus he had to stock additional supplies of frozen ice cream pops and sandwiches into a separate freezer and load up the trays of toppings – walnuts, cherries, butterscotch, chocolate fudge, and caramel; then the cleanup after.

When Bo, Rafe and Nathan were not on the beach, they would go to the Drive-In movie, in Rafe's or Bo's car. Nathan never learned to drive and probably could not have afforded a car

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anyway, although he did have a job working in the tile factory. Nathan would buy the beer for them and they would watch the movies, while making fun of the actors and the scenes in the mostly 'B' movies. These days they paid the full fare, unlike those high school days when one guy might hide in the trunk or lie down on the floor in the back of the car under a blanket. The only thing that was hidden when they drove up to the pay booth was the six packs of bottled beer. Then there were the several times they went over to Joey Pans house and listen to Joey's jazz records.

At times Bo and Rafe would go solo taking a date to the Drive-In. Bo had his personal collection of speakers, the sound of which was generally a scratchy mono, that he'd forget to put back on the pole and would wide up driving away with the broken wire dragging behind, and taking home as a souvenir. Bo had several dates with various girls, and a couple of times doubled with Roger Vaccaro and Gladys, who had recently married.

Saturday evening, August 27, 1960...

While driving to pick up Kim Whitestone for a date at the Drive-In, Rafe heard a song on the radio that brought back a memory of his date with Kim last summer before he went off to college...

*...And darling, they say that our love won't grow.
But I just want to tell them they don't know.
For as long as you're in love with me,
Our love will grow wider,
Deeper than any sea.
And of all the things that I want,
In this whole wide world, is
Just for you to say that you'll be my girl.
Wanting you, I'm so lonely and blue.
That's what love will do.*

It was the first hit by Jerry Butler, "Your Precious Love", when he was with the Impressions, before striking out on his own as a solo artist. Rafe sang along as he thought back to that night last summer...

...He had been invited to dinner at Kim's house with her parents and brother. It had been very cordial, but at first he had felt a bit anxious as Kim's folks were quite obviously one of the elite of Quaytown. It was the first time that Rafe had been in the company of someone who had a maid to serve dinner. Kim's dad was rather quiet and officious, but Kim's mom was gracious and did her best to make Rafe feel at ease. On the other hand, Kim's brother was home from college, acting the part of the self-important, nay pompous college student and seemed intent on trying to make Rafe feel like a rube. Rafe had to hold back a laugh when the brother came down to dinner in a blue smoking jacket with a red silk ascot about his neck, tucked into his shirt top and an unlit pipe in his mouth.

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Fortunately, after dinner Kim led Rafe out to the pool in the back yard. They had changed into bathing suits and were sitting by the pool. Rafe had brought along the 45 of “Your Precious Love” and Kim brought out her phonograph, plugged it into an outdoor outlet and the two of them held hands while listening to the song. “Must have listened to it several times, before Kim put on her Connie Francis LP”, Rafe recalled smiling. “Ah, but tonight it’s to the Drive-In for some really good making out in this green hornet love machine”, he laughed. The Hudson was a great lover’s lane car, with the step-down floors like a sunken living room and the vertically narrow windows all around and the wide, full bench seat in the front. “Tonight just might be the night!” Rafe thought wishfully.

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Events: September 1960 – January 1961...

August 31 – September 13, Hurricane Donna kills 50 in Florida and New England and makes a mess of Long Island and the Jersey Shore, flooding Sea Bright and washing away beaches up and down the east coast.

On September 5, Cassius Clay, before his conversion to Muhammad Ali, wins the gold medal in boxing during the Summer Olympics.

On September 26, the two leading U. S. presidential contenders, Richard M. Nixon and John F. Kennedy, participate in the first ever televised presidential debate.

On October 1, Nigeria gains independence. On October 14, U.S. presidential candidate John F. Kennedy first suggests the idea for the Peace Corps. On October 30, Michael Woodruff performs the first successful kidney transplant in the United Kingdom, at the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary.

On November 2 Penguin Books is found not guilty of obscenity in the *Lady Chatterley's Lover* case. On November 8 in a close race, John F. Kennedy is elected over Richard M. Nixon, becoming the youngest man elected president of the U.S. On November 13 Sammy Davis, Jr. marries Swedish actress May Britt. Interracial marriage is still illegal in 31 U.S. states out of 50. On November 14 Belgium threatens to leave the United Nations, due to criticism of its Congo policy. On November 30 Production of the DeSoto automobile brand ceases.

On December 2 the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev. Geoffrey Francis Fisher, talks with Pope John XXIII for about an hour in the Vatican. It is the first time in more than 500 years that a head of the Anglican Church had visited the Pope. On December 2 U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower authorizes the use of \$1M for the relief and resettlement of Cuban refugees, who have been arriving in Florida at the rate of 1,000 a week. On December 7 the United Nations Security Council is called into session by the Soviet Union, to consider Soviet demands that the U.N. seek the immediate release of former Congolese Premier Patrice Lumumba, the deposed premier of the Congo who was arrested by troops of Colonel Joseph Mobutu. On December 9 French President Charles de Gaulle's visit to Algeria is marked by bloody riots by European and Muslim mobs in Algeria's largest cities, killing 127 people. On December 12 the U.S. Supreme Court upholds a Federal Court ruling that Louisiana's segregation laws are unconstitutional. On December 19 Fire sweeps through the *USS Constellation*, the largest U.S. aircraft carrier, while it is under construction at a Brooklyn Navy Yard pier, killing 50 and injuring 150.

On January 5, the U.S. breaks diplomatic relations with Cuba. On January 11, a racial riot occurs on the campus of the University of Georgia. On January 15, the Supremes sign a contract with Motown Records. On January 16, a Russian espionage ring is uncovered in Great Britain. On January 20, JFK is inaugurated 35th President of the U.S; Robert Frost recites his poem "Gift Outright" at the ceremonies.

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Saturday Evening, September 10, 1960...

*This magic moment,
so different and so new
Was like any other until I kissed you
And then it happened,
it took me by surprise
I knew that you felt it too,
by the look in your eyes*

*Sweeter than wine
Softer than the summer night
Everything I want, I have
Whenever I hold you tight*

*This magic moment
while your lips are close to mine
Will last forever,
forever till the end of time...*

Bo was on his way in the '54 Ford to pick up his date, Judy Olivant, a Senior in QHS. The Drifters song, "This Magic Moment" was playing on the car radio tuned to WABC 770 AM. Bo had dated Judy several times over the summer and he really liked her. "She's a bit of a flirt and a tease! She's pretty good at making out, but she frustrates the hell out of me, because she always stops the action just when it's getting hot and heavy", he said to himself. "But she's fun to be with -- a little wacky", he continued with a smile.

He stopped at Judy's house, got out of the car, dropped the remains of a cigarette on the ground, crushing it under his foot, and walked up to the front door. Just as he reached the door, it suddenly opened. Judy practically jumped out, with a big smile and half laugh at the surprised look on Bo's face. "Surprise! I'm ready!" she nearly squealed in excitement.

Bo recovered as Judy closed the door behind her and said, "Dam...Darn it, Judy, you almost gave me a heart attack! You're too much!"

"Oh, Bo, get used to it, that's the way I am. You'll never be bored with me", Judy laughed. "Well, come on, let's go! We haven't got all night and I want to get to the drive-in to see the cartoons before the movie."

Judy is 5'3", 115 lbs of pure energy. Bo thought exaggeratingly that she could provide electricity in the event of a power failure. The thought led him to say, "I swear, Judy, Jersey

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Central Power & Light could use you if the lights go out, as a second source of power. I never saw anybody as energized as you.”

“Oh, that’s funny, Bo! I’ll have to tell my girlfriend Sally that you said that about me”, she replied enthusiastically, with a little giggle. She was wearing a pair of dark blue pedal pushers and a white sweater, with saddle shoes and bobby sox. As always she wore little makeup – she didn’t need it – just a little on the eyelashes and a pale pink lipstick on her lips which were wide and full, but not overly so, but oh soft and sensual. She wore her hair down to her shoulders. It was naturally straight, so she generally spent time in the evenings donning the curlers and applying the curling lotion and papers, especially before date nights. She had a cherub like face, with naturally rosy cheeks, appropriately sized ears tight to the sides of her head, which you could see when she pulled her hair back in a pony tail. Judy had a lithe body that was still in the process of maturing, but nonetheless appealing to any guy with two eyes and an appreciation for the opposite sex.

Bo just shook his head and had to laugh. “You are too much!” he repeated. They walked to his car; he opened the door for her and closed it once she was comfortably inside on the front bench seat.

When they got to the drive-in, Bo parked in one of the rearmost rows, a favorite for those who wanted a little privacy for necking. They held hands as they walked to the refreshment stand. Judy went to the ladies room, while Bo bought a large cup of buttered popcorn and two large cups of coke. They walked back to the car and snacked on the popcorn and sodas while watching the cartoons, the newsreel, and the coming attractions. They also suffered through the advertisements for the refreshments and then came the usual countdown of the clock up on the large screen as the time for the main feature neared.

Then the movie, Where the Boys Are, starring Connie Francis, started. Before the movie was a third of the way though, Bo was on top of Judy in the front seat. They were passionately kissing. Bo had pulled her sweater up and was rubbing his one hand over her bra covered tits and was dry humping her while trying to unzip her pants with his other hand. All of a sudden she blurted out, “Stop! Bo, please stop! I can’t breathe.”

Bo collected himself and pulled back to sit up on the driver side. He was breathing a bit hard as Judy pulled her sweater down and sat up next to Bo. She said somewhat apologetically, but firmly, “I’m sorry, Bo, but I’m not that sort of girl. I really like you and want to continue dating, but I can’t let you into my pants. I really hope you understand.”

Bo was feeling frustrated. He took a deep breath, looked at Judy and said with a half laugh, “You are such a tease, Judy.” Then more seriously he added, “I like you a lot, too, but you always leave me wanting more. I want to go all the way with you. I want that really bad.”

“I’m sorry, Bo, but it’s just not going to happen. I am not going to do it with anyone before I get married, and I am not ready for that either”, Judy said with conviction. Then while Bo stared angrily out at the movie screen and did not respond, she added “Please, Bo, you do understand, don’t you?”

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Bo returned his glance to look at Judy. He could see the pleading look on her face. “Yeah! I guess I can understand”, he replied somewhat resignedly. “Let’s just watch the rest of the movie.” Then Bo picked up the pack of Lucky’s he had put on the dash, pulled out a cigarette and lit it.

Judy moved over to be close to Bo so that she leaned her head against his shoulder and said sweetly, “Thank you, Bo. I knew you’d understand.”

Bo put his arm around Judy and muttered, “Humph”. They watched the rest of the movie, occasionally commenting about the various scenes.

Friday Evening, October 7, 1960...

Rafe was sitting on the couch next to Heidi Holtzmann in her living room. Heidi had graduated from QHS last June and was attending Montclair College to prepare for a job as a teacher. Heidi was an attractive young woman of 17 with long, thick Brunette, almost black, hair down just below her shoulders. She had black eyebrows which, although tweezed were thick enough to stand out from a distance and arched ever so slightly. Heidi was 5’ 6” and 125 lbs which she carried with grace; she had been a varsity cheerleader at QHS. She had a nice body, with well-defined legs from the thighs down to firm calves and trim ankles, and she was well endowed in the tits department, although she attempted to hide the fact by not wearing push up bras and when she wore a sweater it was generally loose and sometimes a second layer over a blouse. He later assumed that was the influence of her mother. Her face was attractive, but not beautiful, definitely reflecting her Germanic heritage; it was however full of expression, showing instantly her feelings. But for some reason he couldn’t quite understand, Rafe just wanted to hold her, comfort her and kiss those soft rose petal lips.

Opposite them in separate easy chairs were Heidi’s parents. Rafe had a date with Heidi to see a movie at the drive-in; it was their first date. The main feature tonight was Elmer Gantry, starring Burt Lancaster and Jean Simmons; it was being touted as one of the best pictures of the year, with Burt Lancaster an early favorite for nomination as best actor.

From the time Rafe had arrived, Heidi’s dad had been quiet and reserved, reminding Rafe of his own dad. But as he entered the house and as he sat on the couch at her invitation, Rafe could feel Mrs. Holtzmann eying him over with a questioning look, as if sizing him up to assure herself that he was adequate dating material for her daughter.

“So, your name is Rafe, and what is your last name?” asked Heidi’s mom matter of factly.

“Cerny”, Rafe responded and spelled it for her and then anticipating her next question, “It’s Czechoslovakian, but I’m half German on my mom’s side.”

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“And what is your religion?” inquired Mrs. Holtzmann as if it were the most mundane of questions, at which Heidi shifted uncomfortably on the couch.

“I’m Protestant”, answered Rafe, not knowing if that would be considered a negative.

“Interesting”, Mrs. Holtzmann said thoughtfully, and then added with a bit more enthusiasm, “We are Catholic and Holtzmann is German; and it’s spelled with two ‘n’s” at the end.”

Rafe nodded that he understood, but he really wasn’t sure of where the conversation was going and why Heidi’s mom emphasized the spelling of ‘Holtzmann’; it was a few seconds later that he wondered if Heidi’s mom wanted him to know that there was no Jewish ancestry, as it was believed by some that a German name ending with ‘man’ instead of ‘mann’ might be Jewish. But Rafe quickly brushed that thought aside.

A few minutes later Mrs. Holtzmann said, “Heidi tells me that you have taken a year off from college to help your parents afford to pay for your return to college. I think that is commendable. Where are you working?”

“Last summer I drove a soft ice cream truck, but since September I’ve been working at my mom’s company, Winners Engineering; I work assembling varistors that are used for electronics”, Rafe replied. His answer seemed to satisfy Mrs. Holtzmann’s curiosity for the time being. Rafe felt like it had been more like the third degree or a grilling.

During all this time the TV was on and a short lull ensued. Then it became apparent that Heidi’s parents had been awaiting a special program that was about to start. The second debate between John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon was being televised. The first ever televised debate by two presidential candidates had taken place on September 26. Once again John F. Kennedy, the junior senator from Massachusetts was pitted against Richard M. Nixon, current Vice-President for eight years under President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Nixon with his many years of experience in foreign affairs was looked upon by many as the favorite based upon his advantage of experience over the young and minimally experienced Kennedy – particularly since this evening’s debate was focusing on foreign affairs. But the TV screen, broadcast in black and white, actually favored the junior man. JFK, as he was being called by the media, who was not just young, but handsome, trim and photogenic. Nixon on the other hand came across on the screen as unattractive relative to JFK, dark and surly and as the heat from the lights bore down on the two, it was Nixon who was obviously perspiring. The fact that he had a touch of the flu was not publicized, so the impression was that he appeared the more nervous of the two.

About ten minutes into the debate, Rafe looked over at Heidi and quietly said, “We’d better get going, the movie will be starting soon, and we may already have missed the cartoons.”

Heidi nodded her assent and stood up. Rafe followed. Then came the one question he was not prepared for. Mrs. Holtzmann looked up at Rafe and gestured toward the TV. “If you were old enough to vote, would you vote for Nixon or Kennedy?”

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“Uh, I think I’d vote for Nixon. He has been Vice-President and has more experience”, Rafe said honestly, yet somewhat hesitantly, because he was unsure of why he was being asked. Mrs. Holtzmann did not respond immediately, but the fleeting look on her face told Rafe that she was not enamored with his choice. But she covered that up and said looking at both of them, “Well, you two have a nice time at the movies; and don’t be too late tonight.” The ‘don’t be too late’ was directed specifically at Heidi.

Later that night, after the movie, Rafe drove his Hudson up to Heidi’s house, walked her to the door and said, “Goodnight, Heidi. It was nice.”

“Good night, Rafe. I enjoyed our date and the movie”, responded Heidi.

“Good. I’ll call you, OK?” queried Rafe, hoping for a ‘yes’ answer.

Heidi looked up at Rafe and said, “OK, that would be nice”.

Rafe leaned over to kiss her good night, and she let him, but held her hands against his chest to ensure some distance between them. Then he watched as she went into the house. He could see through the curtains in the living room window that Mrs. Holtzmann was awaiting her daughter’s return as she stood up when the front door opened.

Rafe got into his car, lit up a cigarette and drove away. He thought to himself, “Man, what a night. I could really like Heidi, but I’m not sure she is all that hot to trot, and I don’t think I made a great impression on her mother. We sure made out some at the drive-in, but she backed off when I tried to get beyond kissing and a little touchy-feely; but, by god, what a nice body she has and a pretty face; nice dark brunette hair, too.” Rafe recalled that he had liked her in high school, too, but she had been dating a guy that graduated in 1958 who went into military service. He had the impression that she was still stuck on that guy and waiting for him to return from the service. “Well, I’ll think about it tomorrow; about asking her out again. Meanwhile, I need to get home and release some of this ‘tension’ in my groin. Damn! Still a virgin”, he groaned to himself.

Friday afternoon, October 28, 1960...

James and James E. Tyler were just back from the parade ground on the base in D.C. They had gone through two hours of the Evening Parade drills on the parade ground with their unit, the 3rd Platoon, and they couldn’t wait to get their parade dress uniforms off – especially the boots. “Damn, my poor feet!” exclaimed J.E.

“I’m with you buddy. I think we should take a shower and head out for a couple of cold ones at the slop shoot”, James said with a deep sigh. “A couple of brewskies and I’ll sleep like a baby tonight.”

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“Man, I’m not sure I can muster the energy, but I expect after a cold, hot, and cold again shower, I’ll be ready to race you down to the pub”, J.E. responded wearily.

After they had both showered and dressed more comfortably in combat fatigues, they headed down to the pub on the base. “Did you see that other jarhead taking the pictures of our unit on the parade ground?” J.E. asked rhetorically as they walked side by side down the walkway. “Man, I hope he got a good shot of my pretty face while we was paradin’ around the grounds. I’d like to see that on TV, so my woman back home in Savannah could see it. Then when I get home on leave, she’ll be all over me like sugar on a donut. Man I can’t wait to get me some of that blackberry cobbler.”

James couldn’t hold back the laughter. Then kidding he said, “Shit, J.E., if he got a close up of your mug, the camera probably broke.” Then he added, rubbing his hands together, “Now, you take me, if he got me in one of those shots and it was shown on TV, and then when I get home all the babes back home in Quaytown will be lined up, each one just hoping I’d pick her for a roll in the hay.”

“Dream on, Hein! Yo’ sure as hell got a vivid imagination”, J.E. said with a shake of his head and a chuckle. “Come on, we’re here, I’ll buy the first round and you can tell me more of those dreams yo’ got. I need a good laugh.”

James laughed and clapped J.E. on the back as they entered the base pub. They grabbed a table and J.E. brought back two bottles of Schlitz. They ordered hamburgers and fries and sipped on the beers while they awaited the food, neither wanting to have a hangover the next day, as they were scheduled for special guard duty at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier; first J.E., then James. It wouldn’t go over well with the brass to have red eyed, hung over marines standing guard in front of all those thousands of visitors.

“I’m kinda lookin’ forward to standing guard tomorrow”, J.E. said as the food arrived. “But if some wise-ass kid comes by, makes stupid funny faces and tries to get me to break the protocol of staring ahead in silence and walking the prescribed routine, I want you to back me up and give the kid a swift boot in the ass. Think you can do that for your roommate?”

“I got your back, buddy! After all I still owe you for coming to the rescue when I wandered into the wrong neighborhood last August”, James said as he raised his beer in a toast to J.E.

“Wrong neighborhood? Only for you white guys”, J.E. responded half jokingly. And they both laughed aloud.

Then while they continued to eat, drink and talk, someone dropped a coin in the jukebox and played a song that got J.E melancholy....

*Georgia, Georgia,
The whole day through
Just an old sweet song*

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Keeps Georgia on my mind

*I'm say Georgia
Georgia
A song of you
Comes as sweet and clear
As moonlight through the pines*

*Other arms reach out to me
Other eyes smile tenderly
Still in peaceful dreams I see
The road leads back to you*

*I said Georgia,
Ooh Georgia, no peace I find
Just an old sweet song
Keeps Georgia on my mind...*

The recently released Ray Charles song made J.E. turn somber. It was the first time James had heard the song and he could sense from the rendition the blues effect that it had on his friend across the table. So James said nothing and let J.E. lose himself in the music.

When the song ended, J.E. looked over at James and said sincerely, “Man that sure makes me homesick. He’s the Man! Ray Charles! I love to listen to him. Makes me want to be shackled up with my little woman, you know?”

James nodded his understanding. Then, to try and break the mood, he said, “My turn to buy. You want another Schlitz or something stronger?”

“Nah, I’m OK, Another beer will do just fine”, J.E. answered.

After the second round of drinks, the two marine buddies walked back to the barracks. J.E. was still thinking about getting home and confided in James a lot of personal things about his ‘little woman’ and their relationship. James just basically listened.

Friday morning, November 4, 1960...

*They say for every boy and girl
there's just one love in this old world
And I know I've found mine
The heavenly touch of your embrace
tells me no one can take your place
Ever in my heart*

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*Young love first love
filled with true devotion
Young love our love
we share with deem emotion
[guitar]
Just one kiss from your sweet lips
will tell me that your love is real
And I can feel that it's true
We will vow to one another
there will never be any other
Love for you or for me...*

Earle was sitting in a booth in a diner. Across from him was Billy Ray Wilbur, another guy who was working with Earle at the 1001 Auto Parts store in Old Hickory, TN. Billy Ray had put a quarter in the compact Wurlitzer juke box attached to the wall on the right side of the booth, rifled through the pages by the sliding the metal tabs jutting out at the top of the box, and selected several Country and Western songs. “Young Love”, sung by Sonny James had just finished. They were having breakfast before going to work; Earle had ordered Ham Biscuits, two scrambled eggs, and coffee. Billy Ray had ordered a stack of buttermilk flapjacks, country ham, and coffee.

“That song by Sonny James was a big hit last year. Do you remember it, Burn? I remember because I got laid by Brenda Sue Wallace while that song was playing on the radio in my ’57 Chevy”, Billy Ray announced. He had a habit, sometimes annoying to Earle, of prattling on about his conquests. Earle suspected that at least some of it was bullshit, but he didn’t want to confront a fellow worker, especially since he couldn’t be sure.

“I remember hearing that song when I was in high school in New Jersey”, Earle replied as he sipped his coffee. The food had yet to arrive. Billy Ray started speaking again, but Earle was hardly listening. He was thinking back to his days in Quaytown. Memories flooded back about the good times he had there with Bo, Hein, and Rafe. He wondered what had happened to those girls he had a crush on. “What was their names?” he tried to jog his memory. “Oh, yeah, first there was Penny Warlock, and later there was Donna Conklin. Gee I think I’m getting a hard on just thinking about Donna.” He laughed to himself out loud, which startled Billy Ray and brought a confused look to his face.

“What the?” Billy Ray had stopped talking in mid sentence.

Earle came out of his reverie and said apologetically “Sorry, Billy Ray, but I was just remembering some things from my time in Quaytown, New Jersey.”

“Damned if you didn’t look like you were thinkin’ about some pretty young thing. What was her name and did you do the dirty with her?” Billy Ray inquired.

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“Her name was Donna, and I got close a couple of times, but never crossed home plate”, Earle confessed.

The food arrived and they both chowed down. Earle was relieved that he didn't have to listen to Billy Ray's jabbering for a while. Billy Ray was busy stuffing his face and swilling his coffee. It gave Earle a brief time to enjoy the food, one of his favorite things next to girls, beer and booze. It was then that an idea that had been percolating in Earle's mind came to the fore and took on reality, “I want to go back to Quaytown!” he said to himself. And at that instant he began to lay plans. He would work for another month or so to save up some additional money and then just pack up his car and drive up there. But first he would contact Bo. Bo would know where he might find work and an apartment to rent. “Yes! That's what I'll do by golly! I'll have to discuss it with dad and mom, but I don't think they will object.”

Thursday Morning, November 24, 1960...

“Pass me that bottle; my ass is freezing!” Bo leaned across Rafe to make the request of Nathan. Nathan passed across the Blueberry Brandy in the brown paper bag to Bo, who wiped off the lip of the bottle and took a swig of the sweet alcohol. “Damn, that goes down nice and warm”, he announced and handed the bag of brandy over to Rafe. Then Rafe took a swig and handed it back to Nathan.

“The game should be starting soon; then things should start to warm up a bit”, Rafe said hopefully, smacking his gloved hands together. “It's definitely colder than last year or the year before when we played.”

“You can say that again”, responded Nathan, as he tugged up the collar on his three quarter length car coat.

The annual Thanksgiving game was scheduled to start at 11:00 AM between arch rival Quaytown and Mason at the Quaytown field. It was now 10:46 AM and the three of them had arrived at 10:30 AM to get good seats on the home team stands. What was different this year, in addition to the cold breeze blowing across the field directly into their faces, was the fact that Bo's kid brother was the starting quarterback for Quaytown. There it was in the program, Chet Orechio, 5' 7", 160 lbs. Bo looked at that with a sense of pride, despite knowing that the stats for Chet should be more like 5' 6" and 150 lbs, but then that was typical of Coach Ruffy, who always increased the stats of the players to try and intimidate the other teams.

The players from both teams had already had their warm ups and gone into the field houses for their pre-game prep talks. The Mason and Quaytown bands were on the field, lining up, awaiting the players to come charging out of the field houses for the pre-game coin toss.

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“Hey, Rafe, how did your season with the Monmouth Earls end up?” Bo asked still shivering a bit. He was referring to the fact that Rafe had played football this fall with the Earls in the Mid-Atlantic Semi-Pro League.

Rafe turned to Bo and answered, “We wound up with a 4 and 3 record. Most of the guys on the team are ex-QHS players, but a lot are from Ruby Creek Catholic and Middlebury. And one is an ex-Mason player. You came to the three games we played under the lights here on this field. We played one game up in Wooster, Massachusetts, and one down in South Jersey, but the most memorable game was the last one. We played against the prisoners in a state prison in Pennsylvania”.

“No shit! In a prison? Against a team of prisoners? Who won that game?” asked Bo. Nathan, listening in, shivered at the thought of being inside a prison.

Rafe answered, “Well, talk about scary; when we went through those huge heavy doors and they clanged shut behind us, it was the most eerie feeling I’ve ever had. Then the guards searched our equipment bags to make sure we weren’t bringing in anything the prisoners could use for...who knows, whatever.”

“I’d have been scared shitless!” announced Nathan.

Bo nodded his agreement. “But who won the game?”

Rafe replied, “The prisoners! They have nothing to do but practice all week and then they have a team come in on the weekend and beat up on them. Hell, they beat us 12 to 0. On top of that, there wasn’t a blade of grass on the field, just hard dirt. I got my bell rung on one play when I got tackled after intercepting a pass. Oh! And what was really intimidating was that right behind our bench there were all these prisoners in the bleachers, who were betting on the game with match sticks. We could hear them yelling out for either of the teams, depending on which one they bet on. One of them who bet on us was really loud, yelling ‘you better score this time you Sons of Bitches’...talk about intimidation.”

“Jesus! That must have been some experience”, Bo said. Nathan again just shivered.

The players were now on the field and Mason won the toss. They elected to receive the ball. By halftime Mason was up 13 to 7 and the final score was 20 to 13. Bo’s brother, Chet, played well, but the QHS team couldn’t stop the running game of Mason, who had two really fast and shifty running backs.

On the way out of the QHS field, Nathan asked Bo and Rafe, “What do you think about the election, now that JFK is the newly elected President?”

“I just hope he picks some good advisors with background in foreign affairs”, responded Rafe. “We still have issues with the Russians and now that Cuba has become a Communist dictatorship, things could get even more complex”.

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Bo thought for a second and said, "I think he'll do OK. He has some good new ideas, like that Peace Corp."

They shared a few other thoughts and then Bo drove off to bring Nathan home and then to his parent's home for the family Turkey dinner. Bo had just moved into his own apartment in Quaytown. Rafe had driven to the game by himself and headed home. His family was invited to his mom's sister's house for Thanksgiving dinner with his aunt's family.

Saturday Afternoon, December 24, 1960...

The phone rang in Rafe's house. Mr. Cerny answered the phone and called to Rafe, "Rafe, it's for you – Bo's on the line."

Rafe accepted the phone from his dad, "Hey, Bo, what's up?"

"Good news! I got a call from Burn last night. He's coming back to Quaytown right after New Years", answered Bo enthusiastically.

"Hot Damn! That is good news! It will be good to see him again. Did he give a definite date when he'll be here?" asked Rafe.

Bo responded, "It will be sometime around the weekend of January 6. He said it would depend on whether he decides to stop one or two nights at a motel. He thinks it will take about 20 hours from Old Hickory."

"OK. That's only a couple of weeks away. What's his plan for a job? Does he have anything lined up? What about a place to stay?" Rafe inquired.

Bo replied, "He can stay with me at my pad, until he finds an apartment or a room to rent. As for work, I am starting a new job at Emerson in Woodbridge on January 2 – interviewed this week and got a call yesterday that I'm hired. It's a brand new factory and they will manufacture air conditioners. They are looking to hire a lot of people. I'm sure Burn can get in. How about you Rafe? Aren't you tired of that commute to Springfield to you mom's work place? Why don't you apply, too?"

"Sounds interesting; let me think about it – hey, if all three of us were working together we could car pool!" Rafe responded. "Oh, and it's good that you got that bachelor pad, until Burn can find a place."

Then Bo said, "OK, I gotta go get ready for a date tonight with Judy. Have a Merry Christmas, Rafe, and think about getting together for New Years Eve; maybe a double date over to Staten Island."

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“Have a Merry Christmas, Bo. I’ll let you know about New Years Eve.” Rafe said and hung up.

Friday evening, January 6, 1961...

Rafe parked the Hudson outside Bo’s apartment complex in Quaytown. He had gotten a call from Bo saying that Earle had arrived. “Get your ass over here so we can have a few beers and talk about tomorrow!” Bo had ordered in a friendly manner. Rafe quickly walked from the car to front door of Bo’s apartment building D, and rang the bell for the second floor apartment, number D22. The intercom squawked, “Who’s there?”

“It’s me, Rafe. Buzz me in, Bo”, Rafe answered. The buzzer sounded and Rafe pushed through the unlocked door. Bo was standing on the top landing outside the open door to his apartment with a big smile on his face. Rafe took the stairs two at a time and they shared a quick bear hug. Then Bo led the way into the apartment. Standing in the living room was Earle with a warm grin on his face that could not disguise the tiredness from his long journey and a bottle of Schaeffer beer in his right hand.

“Hey, buddy, long time, no see”, Earle said as he stepped forward to greet Rafe. They hugged one another, slapped one another on the back, then stepped back and shook hands vigorously.

“Hot damn, Burn, you’re a sight for sore eyes!” Rafe said.

Then Bo went to the refrigerator, took out a bottle of beer, opened it with a church key and handed it to Rafe. He then picked up his opened bottle off the dinette table, and waived his guests to take a seat in the living room.

Rafe looked at Earle and said as they both sat on the couch, “Burn you look like you are ready to hit the hay. It must have been a grueling trip for you. Did you stop over once or twice?”

“Just the once”, Earle answered. “Yeah, took me 12 hours on that last leg of the trip and I’ll be ready for a good night’s sleep after another beer.”

“Or two or three”, Bo countered, with a laugh. Then, he said in a serious tone, “But about tomorrow. As you know I’m working at Emerson and Emerson is open tomorrow on a Saturday from 9:00 in the morning to 3:00 in the afternoon for people to come in and apply for jobs. They will have Personnel managers on hand to interview the most promising applicants. I’ve already put the word in for you two and I’m sure you both will get in.”

“Well, I’m game”, Rafe responded. “Bo, you’ll need to come along to guide us there. I can come up here and meet you and we can all go together.”

“Yeah, and I need to get a job as soon as possible, so I can afford to get my own pad”, Earle responded.

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“Right! Good! It’s settled then”, Bo confirmed. “Rafe, if you can get here by 7:45 in the morning, I’ll drive us there, so you guys can be among the first in line. Oh, and damn it Earle, we are buddies and you can stay here and sleep on the couch as long as it takes. But we will definitely get the Sunday papers and start looking for apartments or rooms to rent in and around Quaytown, ‘cause I know you won’t be happy until you have your own place.” And to lighten the mood, “And besides, I’m not looking forward to weeks of hearing you snore at night and fart all day.” And the three of them laughed.

Then Rafe jumped in, “I remember one of those nights we came back from Staten Island and you two were having a farting contest. Hein and I were damn near asphyxiated and had to roll down the windows.”

“Hell, yeah, I remembered that night”, Earle answered. “As I recall, Bo won that contest. Must have been the beer on top of all that Italian food he ate before we went out.” That brought a laugh from the three of them and they raised their Schaeffers in salute.

After a couple of minutes of silence, Earle announced, “Damn! It’s good to be together again. I missed y’all and Quaytown...some of my happiest times was here with you guys and Hein. Speaking of Hein, how’s he doing? Is he still in the marines down at Quantico? I think Bo, you told me something about the Honor Guard.”

Rafe responded, “Yeah, Hein is in D.C. with the Marine Honor Guard. You won’t believe Hein, he looks like he’s grown two inches taller. But we haven’t seen him since last summer.”

“I hope he gets a leave soon”, Bo said. “I miss his sense of humor”.

The following day, Earle and Rafe were both offered jobs at Emerson with a start date on Monday, January 16.

Then on Sunday, Earle and Bo poured through the Sunday Asbury Park Press and found a few apartments to rent in Quaytown. They spent the afternoon checking out three that looked decent and where the rent was in the range that Earle felt he could afford. Earle settled on an apartment on Connector Street, which was a main road connecting Quaytown and Mason. The apartment was on the second floor of a two story house that had been converted into two apartments, with the landlord and his wife living on the first floor.

On Monday, the 9th, Rafe went into work with his mom and told the boss that he was giving a week’s notice. The boss was a bit annoyed that it wasn’t at least two weeks notice, but Rafe’s mom was supportive. Besides, Rafe would be getting a small increase in pay, even after paying union dues.

Three of the four old pals were once again reunited.

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Friday evening, January 20, 1961...

Brrr! James felt like he was in a deep freeze. The snow was blowing in a brisk northwest wind of about 18 mph, the temperature was well below freezing and there was about 10 inches of snow already accumulated on the ground. James was among a contingent of the Marine Honor Guard on duty by the main entrance of the Armory in D.C. They were there ostensibly as additional security for the Inaugural ball, but with all the local police and the Secret Service, it was perhaps more to add to the pomp and circumstance that accompanies such self-congratulatory affairs when a new President is inaugurated.

There were five locations for the Inaugural Ball gala, but the Armory was the main location and the one where JFK, First Lady Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy had attended last. James and his mates had been on duty since the Inaugural Parade ended. Early on one of the featured entertainers arrived in a bus – it was Babatunde Olatunji and his Afro-Cuban band. Their groundbreaking "Drums of Passion" was one of the biggest selling albums of its day. Then they observed as many other dignitaries had arrived in one limo after another. The leading stars of Hollywood including Sidney Poitier, Joey Bishop, among others. But it was Frank Sinatra who caused the most excitement on his arrival. Sinatra was to be the Master of Ceremonies.

“Jesus Christ! It colder that a witch’s tit here!” Another marine complained to James. “I don’t know if my balls will defrost after tonight.” The other marine was named Stan DelaCrois and he and James had become close friends. It was a friendship that would last well beyond their years in the Marines. Stan was also from New Jersey.

“Friggin right!” James answered, trying to keep his teeth from chattering. “I’m trying to imagine being in front of a fireplace with a roaring fire, naked with a hot babe, but it’s not helping very much.”

Just then another limo pulled up at the front entrance and a beautiful blonde woman was escorted out of the car by her escort. Her top coat was unbuttoned and the fashionable gown she was wearing was all too obviously a low cut design that showed more of her ample bosom than modesty would expect, especially as she leaned over to get out of the car. As they walked past James and on into the armory, James and Stan had all they could do to keep their officious stance. Once the blonde and her escort had entered, James looked over to his mate and said as quietly as possible so as not to break protocol, “Holy Shit! Did you catch the cleavage on that blonde babe? She had no bra! I’d like to bury my face in that in front of a fireplace! That would make this duty more than worth freezing my ass off.”

“Hein, you’d have to fight me off first!” responded Stan with a subdued laugh. James wanted to laugh aloud, but he had to hold it in, because the protocol required it, and once again a cold gust of wind whipped at them.